

## Babylonian Near Eastern and Maritime Hegemony

Copyright April, 2020 Owen Gus Mills

Babylonian conquest continued outward as Near Eastern Hellenistic cultures and Monotheism. The major Abrahamic religious establishments; the early Sunni'ite Caliphates, Roman Catholicism, and Rabbinical Judaism were utilized by one group, "Babylonian Monotheism" or "Babylon", to achieve its geopolitical goals.

Babylonian Monotheism maintained a maritime-economic hegemony. Maritime regions were the most economically lucrative. Maritime Civilizations had a long term advantage in prolonged, exhausting territorial conflicts. Maritime regions were also coveted for these reasons. Once established in the Mediterranean, it expanded around the maritime littoral of Eurasia.

A maritime orientation allowed Babylon to dominate in Eurasian or geopolitical conflicts with a minimal territorial footprint, and from an adjacent orientation; the Near East, including Mesopotamia, and Egypt.

Babylonian monotheism and Western Civilization were committed to a larger conflict for Eurasian dominance in order to preserve themselves in the Near East, Egypt, and the Mediterranean, and to further expand along maritime regions. This conflict zone more or less comprised the extent of the Silk Road, or oriental trade. This broad involvement lasted until the European Age of Exploration. Oceanic travel and armaments developed at this time lessened the need for vast territorial defensive measures, and increased technological asymmetry.

Near Eastern imperial conquest expanded outward in a symmetrical fashion. This allowed for the establishment of an Indo-Mediterranean trade hegemony connected by Egypt.

India was the global entrepot of commerce from the Hellenistic era until modern times. Its production was steadily 1/3 of global GDP from the time of Ashoka until the Industrial Revolution. The conquest of India together with the Mediterranean allowed for the establishment of Eurasian maritime-economic hegemony.

The Near East is the geographical center of Eurasia. Its importance was magnified by the need to control of one or more of the overland routes between the Mediterranean and the Arabian Sea until the era of European exploration. These routes represented the access of Indo Arabian trade to the Mediterranean or the Western world.

Babylon's maritime interests expanded over the first millennium, from the Mediterranean to around the periphery of Eurasia, to Western Europe, India, Africa, and Southeast Asia. It remained centered in the Near East and Mesopotamia, and extended its influence into Central Asia along the Silk Road. It continued to expand into the interior of Asia until it became establishment in Egypt and India during the Crusades era.

The Near East was economically and politically asymmetric to most places. A progression of increasingly larger Near Eastern Empires, from Akkad to the Abbasids, expanded outward into neighboring regions.

These expansions occurred in cycles. The military and political reach of these Empires at their peak defined a lasting Near Eastern or Monotheistic political, cultural, and economic zone. Each phase of expansion was considerably larger.

A Babylonian sphere of influence expanded in phases, alongside the progression of ever larger, Middle Eastern Empires. This created concentrically larger spheres of dominance extending from the Near East. These spheres resembled an oblong shape that gradually extended outward from the Near East, around the maritime periphery of Eurasia, but also inland as it was necessary.

The cycle of outward expansions continued until the maritime regions had been sufficiently conquered to establish a wholly peripheral or external strategy. This occurred around the time that the Mamluk Sultanates of Cairo and Delhi were established. After this point, Babylon ended its close relationship with the Near Eastern Empires, and they ceased to determine the course of Western Civilization.

Economic low points caused the Near Eastern Empires to contract. The absolute low point was usually characterized by widespread nomadic invasions from the north, across the lateral extent of the cultural and economic zone. When these northern invasions reached their furthest western extent and then receded, Babylon used them to establish itself there, in the next ideal western periphery. Babylon positioned itself to take advantage of the recession of Near Eastern Empires and nomadic invasions at the most opportune time.

Nomadic warfare and migrations across the Eurasian steppe put regular pressure outward into adjoining regions of Asia. During economic low points, nomadic invasions spread over a large portion of Eurasia. Certain maritime regions such as parts of the Mediterranean or Western Europe had the advantage of being the most isolated from these pressures, while still being connected to the Arabian and Silk Road economies of Asia.

Nomads formed an integral part of the Silk Road because it passed through Central Asia. A branch of the Silk Road was created in the medieval era that passed through northern steppes. This was controlled by nomads.

After the introduction of the Iron Age in Siberia and Mongolia, a progression of nomadic Empires expanded from Central Asia until the time of Timur. Their formation and expansion first created waves of migrations across Asia. After they had expanded themselves, they attacked common enemies intermediate to them and those in the west. This pattern recurred about every three hundred years. It was an important component of Western politics.

The westernmost extent of nomadic invasions was usually pivotal to western politics, and formed the basis of Roman Christian political strategy. A peripheral advantage is how Western Christendom prevailed over its primary adversary, Constantinople.

The Vikings and Goths as river and sea born traders were “nomads of the Sea”. The Goths adopted the lifestyle of the Scythians after conquering them, and this made them further resemble nomads. They were subsequently pressured by the Huns into the Roman Empire.

Superior intelligence. Long distance traders have a network of information that they can use or sell.

Patience and timing: Wait for other parties to wear each other down. Let others do your work. Enter the conflict at the optimal time, i.e. “last minute”, for the maximum advantage over others. This strategy constantly recurs. It allows resources to be used with the maximum effect.

Divide and conquer.

The extension of Near Eastern economic and political trends prompted the development of adjacent regions. This contact-development trend made it an ideal time to gain economic and political influence in adjacent regions of strategic interest.

Preliminary contacts between Near Eastern imperialism and peripheral regions occurred through long distance trade. This primarily developed them economically. The territorial expansion of Near Eastern imperialism would eventually reach the region. This introduced an unprecedented military threat that accelerated the political consolidation of the adjacent region. For example, the Assyrians traded with the Greeks, the Persian invasions united Greece, and then the Macedonians conquered Persia themselves.

“Where goods can go, so can armies.”

Western Civilization wasn’t developed directly by these Near Eastern hegemonies. Instead, it was developed by a group that exploited the economic and political forces of these Near Eastern hegemonies in order to facilitate their own parallel development.

There were two major considerations to the timing of Near Eastern conquest and expansion. The first was to counter competing strategies and opposition.

The other consideration was to intervene in places of interest at the most opportune time. This was the easiest way to expand into new regions. The most favorable time was when a previous ruler had succeeded or nearly succeeded in uniting a region under their control, but had exhausted theirs and others resources in the process.

There was another way to benefit by being located at the extremity of a Near Eastern hegemony. Being at its fringe meant that they might avoid being conquered by it, but receive some nominal protection and/ or a status as a buffer state with much freedom.

History could be described as a confrontation between two economic forces; maritime and terrestrial commerce. Terrestrial commerce, or the Silk Road proper, was the domain of the Iranian oasis cities. These Iranians established long distance contacts with nomads across the steppes in order to maintain interior trade routes.

Certain rivers were as important as the seas.

The growth and western spread of Christendom was timed with economic downturns. Large scale economic downturns left the Silk Road vulnerable, which caused widespread nomadic invasions. These

nomadic invasions moved from east to west, and reached Egypt and Europe last. This benefited Judeo Christianity, which was centered in these places.

To shift westward, they had to focus away from the Middle East. They also depended on nomadic invaders from the steppes to do this. They could only shift away from the Middle East when steppe nomads regularly suppressed that region by invasions from the east and north. This means that they relied on nomadic invasions, stemming from the Russian steppes, for both an anterior and posterior strategy.

Economic gain was the reason for peace. As the economy approached its peak, the reason for peace disappeared. They would shift their focus to consolidating political control. If they were successful, they used the newly acquired power to conquer the next place during the following period of volatility.

Because it was coordinated with nomadic invasions, the establishment of Christianity and Islam corresponded directly to the pattern of the development of ever larger Mongolian empires, and their encroachment on the Middle East and Europe.

The western frontier of Christianity always contained an exclusive group of politically influential Roman Christian Jews. The location of these Jews could be described as the western extremity of the Silk Road. Despite being located at the western extremity, they had broad interests and activities. The description of the Rhadanite Jews portrays a group in France that operated the most notable trans-Silk Road enterprise. They were in close contact with Babylonian Jews, and probably had an exclusive relationship to the Exliarch or Geon. They succeeded the Babylonian Geonim as the center of Rabbinical authority when that institution ceased to exist.

Jewish, Christian, and Islamic traders were responsible for the continued prosperity, and the positions of their various religions and cultures in the West. Romanized Jews were but one obscure branch of Jews situated at an extremity, but one with remarkable traits. They exploited the fall of the Roman Empire to inherit its momentum of occidental conquest. They established themselves in Western Europe this way from the end of the ancient period. They remained preeminent from this early time when Western Europe was an unremarkable place. They maintained an exclusive relationship to the Babylonian Jews, and conducted a far reaching Silk Road enterprise.

The preeminence of Roman Jews may only date to the end of the Islamic expansion around 750-800. It could be then that the Geon and or Exliarch transferred itself to Europe before the subsequent decline of the Caliphate in the later 9<sup>th</sup> century. This coincides with the end of the period of Babylonian economic supremacy that began in the mid Sasanian Period.

End of Introduction

The Mesolithic period saw the refinement of stone technologies. Long distance trade was well established by the late Mesolithic period. Microliths were small, uniform points traded over long distances. Obsidian routes were established around Western Asia and in neighboring regions.

Obsidian trade network prompted the development of the oldest villages in Anatolia. A unique network of villages 8000-7500 B.C. around Anatolia and Northern Mesopotamia. However, these didn't continue into the Neolithic period.

Dessication of the Sahara, Arabian Peninsula. Trade routes in the Sahara shown by rock art.

10,000 B.C. Neolithic period began in the Levant. Natufian Culture early cultivation mixed with hunter gathering.

Ohalo II (21,000 B.C.) Small dwellings located in the Dead Sea. Hut found with almost 100,000 seeds in it. Sowing plants is straightforward. Demographic pressures prompted the adoption of sedentary, agricultural lifestyles. The need for superior material culture prompted the Neolithic Revolution.

Early Neolithic cultures were far more advanced than contemporary cultures. This shows steep technological asymmetry.

Jericho was a Natufian settlement. Stone wall and tower are an anomaly for archaeology.

Prepottery Neolithic A (PPNA) had an advanced understanding of pyrotechnics based on their use of lime-plaster floors. This understanding is how they subsequently developed pottery. Pyrotechnics would continue to be centrally important due to metallurgy and its military implications. Also, the Jews had a vibrant glass industry into the medieval era due to their superior pyrotechnical abilities. The early focus on pyrotechnics is interesting because it remained an important technological skill throughout history.

The Levant is a confined region with limited space for population growth. This is why the Neolithic "revolution" began there. This factor also created a widespread environmental crisis in the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> Millennium B.C., about 1000 years after widespread use of livestock by PPNB peoples. The crisis appears to have been the driving factor that caused the shift from Middle to Late PPNB societies in the Levant. The probable reason for the crisis was that goats had severely overgrazed all arable land in the region.

A widespread depopulation of the region occurred. Most Middle-PPNB sites in the Levant were abandoned at this time. People moved primarily into the eastern highlands of Jordan, and formed into much larger settlements. A handful of "megasites" emerged in this region. The largest of them probably had 3-4,000 people. Two story buildings were constructed.

The PPNB skull cult of the Levant disappeared during this transition. This means that PPNB kinship groups were replaced by a different type of community leadership. It appears that kinship groups were strengthened, but were leaders were now coordinating between one another.

The largest PPNB site excavated in Jordan was Ain Ghazal. Two new types of structures at Ain Ghazal suggest changes in leadership. The first one is small buildings that were probably some type of shrine. The size of the building suggests that only group leaders who resided adjacent to them were able to access the shrine.

The other new type was two larger buildings that probably served some kind of public role. They were located in prominent locations on a hillside so that they were visible to everyone in the community. The size of the building meant that they couldn't have been a public gathering space. Instead, they seem to have been a meeting place for the leaders of kinship groups. This suggests that a new community wide level of organization was developed. The exclusive buildings suggest that a type of sodality existed, and decisions were made in secret.

Climatic conditions and continued environmental degradation around these larger sights made the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> millennium increasingly volatile for farming. These conditions peaked at the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> millenium, leading to another widespread depopulation in the Levant in the beginning of 7<sup>th</sup> millenium. The megasites in the northeast collapsed, and remained only on a much smaller scale. (Rollefson)

The depopulation of the Levant coincides with the spread of the Pottery Neolithic period in the Middle East. It was also when Neolithic migrants began moving down into Mesopotamia.

Settlers sailed to Crete with livestock and started new villages there c. 7250 B.C. This shows that large scale Neolithic migrations could take place.

The pottery Neolithic began in the 7<sup>th</sup> Millenium. Pottery meant more surpluses and the irreversible shift to a sedentary existence.

Anatolia/ Obsidian

Gobleki tepe in Anatolia, near Syria, was abandoned 7400 B.C. Most known PPNB sites excavated in Southern Anatolia, near Syria, were abandoned in the mid 7<sup>th</sup> century (Akkerman, p. 49). The beginning of the Neolithic period in Anatolia coincides with the collapse of the obsidian trade network centered there.

In the Bronze Age, most of the disruptive nomadic migrations into Mesopotamian Civilization started in Syria or Arabia and moved southeast. This made the southern extremity of Mesopotamia have the advantage of being the most isolated from them. It was also isolated by ocean, deserts, and marshes.

Sumerian civilization became politically and economically superior at an early time when warfare wasn't common. Warfare became common in Sumer during the transition to the Early Bronze Age. The Early Bronze Age saw the influx of East and Northwest Semitic nomads into Sumer. Different waves of Semites over the next 2,000 years fused with an element of Sumerian civilization and become a major component in the development and expansion of Sumerian civilization, which eventually became Western Civilization.

Cycles of invasions and assimilation of new nomadic or barbarian invaders into society ensured that the ruling class was illiterate and dependent on counsel. This benefited primarily the non-imperial component of society, the commercial-religious establishment. The formula of nomadic or barbarian assimilation would be repeated outside the Middle East in the current era.

## Sumer

Archaeologists assume that there are deeper layers obscured under the water table in southern Mesopotamia. Therefore, we can't be certain of the oldest settlements in Sumer. Also, only large tells, or mounds that have left a visible hump in the present landscape can be found. We know nothing about smaller sites.

The oldest excavated site is Tel El Ouei. The discovery of Tel El Ouei created a new period, called Ubaid O or the Ouei period. Tel El Ouei is best described as "proto Samarra culture". Keeping in mind the difficulty of determining a starting point in Sumer, a date of 7000-6500 for Ouei is interesting because it precedes or coincides with the disruptions in the Levant at the end of the PPNB.

6,000 saw the emergence of Samarra culture in Central Mesopotamia. Samarra produced some of the finest early pottery, which was traded over long distances. It had monumental architecture, and exhibited the beginnings of social stratification. The architecture bears resemblance to the earlier Ouei period.

Migrants from the Levant could have arrived in Sumer via Northern Mesopotamia, or around the Arabian Peninsula. Because it was the mature Pottery Neolithic period, the large alluvial plains of Mesopotamia were the most lucrative region for enterprising farmers and traders. The Tigris and Euphrates rivers, and the high water table, were a convenient way to transport goods, and had the potential for increased interconnectedness of sites. Mesopotamia was still sparsely inhabited at the beginning of the Pottery Neolithic, making it easily settled.

The first major pottery Neolithic culture in the Levant was the Yarmukian culture, c. 6400-6000 B.C. The largest Yarmukian site was Sha'ar HaGolan. It was revolutionary in several ways. It was one of the largest sites in the world at the time. It had the first carefully planned out streets. The architecture was innovative, and the courtyard first appeared here.

There is an interesting connection between the Levant and Sumer in the 6<sup>th</sup> Millennium B.C. There were figurines with distinctive eyes that were made to look like a type of sea shell. Archaeologists call them "coffee bean" eyes because they look like the flat side of a coffee bean. There are two examples with them in the Levant; one at the primary Yarmukian site, Sha'ar HaGolan, and another further to the north in Syria. These unique eye shapes have also been found in the Samarra culture, in Mesopotamia. In both of these places, they are on figurines of women with accentuated curves typical of the fertility goddess, or "Venus" goddess type.

Figurines with coffee bean eyes were made by the subsequent Ubaid culture in southern Mesopotamia or Sumer. However, they were now on slender, unique figurines that are described as "reptilian" in appearance, and which probably exhibit features of cranial deformation.

The examples of these distinct eyes in these two distant places, and their use by the later Ubaid period are compelling. It could show a migration of a Neolithic culture from the Levant to Mesopotamia, or at least implies some sort of interaction between the two cultures.

In the sixth millennium, Mesopotamia was divided into the Hassuna culture in the north, and the Samarra culture in the center. The Samarra culture would gradually expand southward with the development of irrigation so that by 5,400 B.C., Eridu was created in the extreme south.

Over the first half of the 6<sup>th</sup> Millennium, the trend in Syria was the contraction or abandonment of larger sites and the spreading out of people over larger areas. In Sumer, however, the opposite was occurring.

The Samarra culture precedes Halaf by a few centuries. Samarra played an important role in the formation of Halaf culture. Samarra pottery was present in proto-Halaf, 6100-5900, the and earliest Halaf layers, along with dark faced burnish ware from Syria, and Obsidian. The maturation of Halaf culture during the early Halaf period led to the discontinuation of this trade. The Halaf transformation therefore severed this long distance trade. p. 50.

Samarra produced some of the finest pottery and had monumental architecture. These things put it at the forefront of Neolithic cultural developments, despite it being the earliest culture in central Mesopotamia. This could be explained by the influx of foreign elite that sought out Mesopotamia for a variety of its characteristics; geographical isolation, fertile alluvial plains, water transport.

The development of irrigation by the Samarra culture allowed for settlement in the far south of Mesopotamia, and the beginning of Sumerian Civilization there.

Ubaid 1, also called Eridu, began 5400 B.C. It shows an origin in the Samarra culture. It was limited to Eridu, in the extreme south of Sumer, near the Persian Gulf. A large settlement at Eridu meant that the use of irrigation had spread here from the Samarra culture. There were still no cities at this time.

Medium to large settlements in Sumer, or southern Mesopotamia, were completely dependent on irrigation. Sumerians used the high water table for irrigation instead of rainwater. This meant that good sources of water were easily controlled. Irrigation also necessitated the organization of labor for collective projects. These two things led to the establishment of a hierarchy whose position was well secured.

The emergence of hierarchical institutions during the Neolithic period preceded the creation of states by millennia. They are usually referred to as chiefdoms. Early Ubaid hierarchy was based on the redistribution of agricultural staples, and the control and management of irrigation. The priesthood comprised the ruling elite.

The Tigris and Euphrates were prone to violent and unpredictable flooding. The temple provided security by storing reserves and redistributing them during flood years. This could have been how it came into existence. Civilization in Sumer was based on a new model of artificiality. It wasn't an ideal place to live, but it was an ideal place to control society. (Stein)

The size of this type of chiefdom depended on the priest chief's ability to mobilize labor for irrigation and agriculture. They used the community role of the temple to maximize the economic leverage of that institution for personal gain. Ibid



Ubaid society continued to emphasize the importance of kinship groups as corporate entities. Priesthoods were held by certain kinship groups. The Ubaid chiefdoms probably extended their influence through a network of marriage alliances.

Archaeologists have found almost no examples of prestige or luxury items at Ubaid sites. Luxury items almost always accompanied the existence of ruling elite in a society. This has led a wide range of theories about the nature of the hierarchy in Ubaid society. Weiss thinks that the Ubaid elite were discreet about their wealth because it was derived from their role as providers of ostensibly egalitarian functions; agricultural redistribution and especially the operation of the temple. Ibid

Ubaid 1 lasted from 5800-5200 B.C. Settlements were limited to the environs of Eridu.

Midle Ubaid: The development of large canal networks connected major settlements in Sumer. Eridu became the first city in the world during time, c. 4500-4000 B.C.

The first definite example of Sumerian superiority was during the final Ubaid phase. The Ubaid culture spread northward to include all of Mesopotamia and some neighboring regions. It therefore covered the "ecumen"; most of civilization at that time.

The spread of Ubaid culture has been decreasingly seen as a political domination, but rather as a complex cultural transformation. Ubaid society was a superior material culture. The spread of the Ubaid chiefdom model outside of the dry farming zone, whose conditions created it, exhibits remarkable stability and growth potential compared to other Neolithic societies (Stein Rothman).

The Ubaid culture was remarkable both for its long interrupted 1,500 year existence in Sumer, as well as for spreading to Northern Mesopotamia and Syria. Ibid

Southern Mesopotamia was ideally isolated from other contemporary societies, yet accessed them via the Euphrates and Tigris. This allowed for the long uninterrupted development of society there, and its eventual expansion of influence into Northern Mesopotamia and Sumer.

The Sumerian kings list begins by saying "when the kingship descended from heaven, it was at Eridu". This may be a memory of the Ubaid period at Eridu. The Ubaid Culture is remarkable for its continuous 1,500 year existence in southern Mesopotamia. It was so prolific that it expanded outside of the dry farming zone to Northern Mesopotamia and Syria and replaced the Halaf culture there. Ibid

Juris Zarins proposed that The Genesis is a recollection of the earliest times in Sumer. He thinks that Eden was located in the Persian Gulf, which was dry during the last ice age. He found this location by identifying the four rivers in Genesis that flowed into Eden. These were Pison, the Gihon, Chidekel, and Phirat.

The last two rivers were already established to be the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Zarins identifies the Pison with the Wadi Batin, a dried up river bed in Eastern Saudi Arabia that flows northeast into

Mesopotamia. This is based on plentiful clues provided in the Genesis. Pison is described as located in the Havilah, a biblical nation associated with Mesopotamian and Arabian peoples. It is said to be rich in bdellium, an aromatic resin found in Northern Arabia, and also gold.

The Gihon river is stated in the bible to “encompasseth” Ethiopia. Zarins agrees with the earlier opinion of the biblical scholar Ephraim Speiser that the association the Gihon river with Ethiopia is due to a mistranslation of Kashu to Kush that occurred in the King James Bible. Instead, Kashu was a common name for Kassite Babylon during the late Iron Age, when the Israelites were forming. Based on this, he identifies the Gihon with the Karun river, which flows from Iran into the Persian Gulf. The Karun river contributed the most silt to the Tigris-Euphrates delta before it was dammed in modern times.

Eden was a Sumerian word for fertile plain. The Bible states that Eden was east of Israel.

Zarins thinks that the Genesis is told from the point of view of hunter gatherers around the desiccated Persian Gulf, especially in Oman. As conditions became less ideal, they moved inland and discovered the first civilization, the Ubaid at Eridu. The Ubaid Culture also stretched down into Oman, which increased the chances of contact with hunter gatherers there.

To Zarins, Genesis portrays the crisis of conscience these hunter gatherers faced when they were confronted with civilization, and had to make irreversible changes to their way of life.

Benno Landsberger, an early influential Assyriologist, thought that the early Ubaid society was comprised of different groups that were present there from the earliest times. These were fishermen, Neolithic migrants, and Semitic pastoralists.

Enki was the patron deity of Eridu. He’s important for his long role in Mesopotamian religion, beginning in the Ubaid Period, for his role in Babylonian mythology, and possibly for his connections with Yahweh. The temple to Enki at Eridu dates to 5,000 B.C.

The temple that would come to be associated with Enki was originally dedicated to the Abzu, the god of the watery deep. Abzu was eventually anthropomorphized into Enki, the primary male fertility god. E Abzu remained the name of Enki’s temple.

Over the next 4,500 years, the temple underwent 18 expansions. The Apsu, or pool, remained in front of Enki’s temple, and later became a common feature in front of Mesopotamian temples.

Enki during the earliest period was probably subordinated to Ninhursag, the Sumerian mother goddess. Ninhursag had a temple dedicated to her at Eridu. It was called Esagilla, or the *house with lofty head*. At some point, Enki took precedent over Ninhursag. He became the father of Inanna, an important Sumerian goddess who resided at Uruk. Inanna would become the most widely revered Mesopotamian deity in the Bronze Age.

Enki was the creator. Sumerians believed that life came from fresh, or “sweet” water. They contrasted “sweet” water to salt water, a benign substance that surrounded their universe. Enki’s semen was the sweet water from which life emerged.

Enki became Ea in the Akkadian period and spread throughout the Middle East. Enki had a supportive role in the Babylonian creation myth as the father of Marduk. The Apkallu, legendary wisemen whose bodies were half-fish, were the priests of Enki. The Apkallu became a frequent decoration in Neo Assyrian motifs. The most famous Apkallu was Adapa, who was prominent in Babylonian mythology and was known to the Greeks as Oannes.

The next and final pre-historical period in Sumeria is the Uruk period. During the Uruk period, the first political unit resembling a state emerged. Uruk civilization spread to an even larger area than the Ubaid culture, with Uruk as its commercial and cultural center.

A transfer of power from Eridu to Uruk may be described in the Sumerian myth, "Inanna steals the Mes from Enki". Mes was a Sumerian term that means the "fruits of civilization". She was the patron deity of Uruk, where she resided. In the myth, she is jealous of her father for possessing the *mes*. She gets him drunk and steals it from him, then she carries it back to Uruk. When Enki comes to, he is enraged at her and seeks revenge. Eventually, he accepts the loss of the *mes* to Inanna, and its transfer to Uruk.

The transition from the Ubaid to Uruk period could have been prompted by the addition of a wealth distribution network in addition to continued staple finance control (Stein). This would have created a hybridized structure combining both types of early chiefdoms, a wealth finance structure overlayed on top of a staple finance structure. This would have created an increasingly complex and layered society, a "super chiefdom", that engaged in profitable long distance trade. It would have combined the attributes of both types of chiefdoms, with potential for growth and reasonable stability.

Sumeria was devoid of resources other than soil, clay, reeds, and tar. As wealth developed in Sumer, the demand grew for luxury and prestige items. The lack of resources necessitated profitable long distance commerce via the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, and the Persian Gulf.

A lack of resources was another attribute of its environment that prompted an artificial and highly organized society. This combined with the ideal maritime location in Mesopotamia could have been a consideration of a Neolithic enterprise who sought this region out.

The Middle Uruk period saw the rapid urbanization of Mesopotamia. The late Uruk period is called the "Uruk expansion". This was when Uruk developed far reaching trade routes to source metals, timber, and luxury items. The reason for this trade was to provide luxury items to an expanded elite class in Sumer.

Uruk migrants set up trading colonies in new places and exported their culture to these places. This led to a great expansion of Uruk society beyond Mesopotamia, into neighboring regions of Syria, Eastern Anatolia, the Transcaucuses, Western Iran, and Elam. The nature of the Uruk presence varied in these regions, but for the most part they were satellite trading colonies of Uruk. In some places, there were increased exchanges with local cultures. In other places, like Syria, there may have been conflicts

(Hamblin, p. 41). There was still little evidence for warfare in the Middle East during this period, but it begins in the following period. Ibid

For the most part, the Uruk system was vastly more advanced than the societies in these neighboring regions, and its relationship to them was asymmetrical. Over time, contacts with the populations in these neighboring regions caused them to develop politically themselves. Therefore, Uruk probably increasingly faced resistance or less favorable conditions in its distant trading colonies. This could have been a factor that brought about the end of the Uruk period. A single culture and vast trade network even close to its size wouldn't exist again for 1,500 years, in the Middle Bronze Age.

In the pre-historical periods, including the Ubaid and the Early to Middle Uruk periods, there were no kings. These cultures were governed by a theocracy whose power was based on the redistribution of staple goods. Warfare was not yet a preoccupation of society.

The King list mentions eight "antediluvian", or pre-flood kings, which probably represents a time as far back as the last few centuries of the Uruk period.

The transition to the early Bronze Age occurred during the late Uruk period, circa 3250. There are many indications that Sumer was passing the threshold to become a militant society at this time. The development of other large urban centers in Mesopotamia probably caused the emergence of warfare in Early Bronze Age Mesopotamia. (Hamblin, )

The late Uruk period saw rapid urban growth. While Uruk in the early period probably had 10,000-20,000 inhabitants, by the late Uruk period it had 50-80,000 inhabitants. It was still, by far, the largest city in the world. Immense monumental architecture appeared in the Uruk at this time.

Uruk contained two monumental temple complexes around which the city was built. The larger one was the Eanna (Akkadian: *Inanna*) district. This was where the first evidence of writing came from. The other was the An district. By the late Uruk period, both temples were dedicated to Inanna.

Uruk migrants were especially active in colonizing Syria. Habub Kabira and Tell Brak, in the Khabur valley, were important fortified Uruk outposts. Unlike most places, there seems to have been conflict in Syria between the Uruk migrants and the locals (Hamblin). Habub Kabira was abandoned.

The main reason for the end of the Uruk period was probably competition with newly emerged urban centers in Sumer. The influx of Northwest Semites from Syria into Sumer could have also been a factor in the collapse of the Uruk system.

The position of ruler was taken from the En priest by the kings. However, priests continued to serve as the intermediary between humans and gods. Priests and diviners were consulted about all important decisions, including warfare. The temple continued to serve central economic functions in society.

Kingdoms emerged in Egypt around 3200 B.C. The Dynastic Period began with the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt around 3050 B.C. The not disproven Dynastic Race Theory says that Sumerians invaded Egypt around this time and became the nobility of ancient Egypt.

The Indus Valley Civilization began around 3300 B.C. due to increased trade with Uruk. It may have originally been a Uruk trading colony.

The Kish people were a Semitic, seminomadic people that had gradually been settling in North-central Mesopotamia. Their migration probably contributed to the end of the Uruk Period. Kish was their main city in Central Mesopotamia. It was located in the same vicinity as the later Semitic capitols; Akkad and Babylon.

The late Uruk period was followed by the Jemdet Nasr period (c. 3100-2900 B.C.) The Jemdet Nasr culture was a continuous development of Uruk culture. The Jemdet Nasr culture was focused in northern Sumer, north of Uruk. There is little evidence of Jemdet Nasr culture further south than Uruk. However, a seal from the period was found that suggests an alliance between Jemdet Nasr, Uruk, and major cities throughout Sumer.

Jemdet Nasr bordered the Semitic Kish people in northern and central Mesopotamia. In the subsequent period, called the Early Dynastic period, Kish people dominated Sumer from their capitol, Kish. However, Kish people had assimilated into Sumerian society, and worshipped Sumerian gods. The Jemdet Nasr culture was probably an important period for this assimilation.

In the late Uruk period, during the transition to the Bronze Age, warfare or self defense became a preoccupation of Sumerian Civilization. This preoccupation created the permanent position of a military leader; the king. The newly created kingship was in competition with the religious theocracies of Sumer that predated it by millennia.

It was during the period when the kingship was invented that Kish dominated Sumerian society. From the perspective of the temple establishment, Kish rule could have been preferable to native rule because they were remote, and were a semi-civilized people. The priests could have cooperated with Kish to bring about their foreign occupation as an alternative to a more direct, native rule.

The Kish may have been the beginning of a relationship between religious establishment and nomadic, barbarian rulers. The Kish people and other Semitic nomads were active long distance traders. This made them indispensable to long distance commercial interests in Sumer.

The Sumerian people are likewise seen by some accounts as a warrior class in Sumer who revolted against, and overthrew Sumerian society. By this account, using the word Sumerian to refer to Southern Mesopotamia before 2750 B.C. is only for geographical reference. This means that the Sumerian dynasties who came to rule around 2750 B.C. were another barbarian people who may have been supported by a temple based revolution, and whose rule precipitated a religious renaissance.

Religious political establishments became preoccupied for millennia with limiting kingly or imperial authority. It did this to maintain its grip over society. Internal politics, foreign diplomacy and

relationships with nomadic or barbarian peoples were all ways in which the religious class undermined kingly authority.

On the King list, the flood is followed by the First Dynasty of Kish. This is the beginning of the Early Dynastic period of Sumerian history. The Early Dynastic period lasted until the conquests of Sargon, from 2900-2300 B.C.

The Early Dynastic period is divided into three periods; ED I, II and III. ED I (2900-2700) corresponds to the first dynasty of Kish. Sumer was called Kish during this period. Almost nothing is known about EDI. It was a period of isolation for Sumer and much of the Middle East. EDII is also obscure, but is the topic of the Sumerian epics. Writing developed at this time, and became widespread in the EDIII period.

Despite the isolation of Sumer during EDI and EDII period, urbanization appears to have continued, especially in Uruk. The early Dynastic I and II periods were the height of Uruk Civilization, before the power in Sumer became more evenly distributed between cities. It could be described as the twilight of the Uruk Civilization. The epic heroes, Gilgamesh, Lugalbanda, and Enmerkar, were kings of Uruk.

ED III commenced the situation of rival city states that are better known and often associated with Sumerian history. The loss of Uruk's hegemony in EDIII corresponds to the building of Mari in upper Mesopotamia.

Sumer in the Early Dynastic period was made up of independent city states that fought each other for the religiously conferred kingship. Until the last century before Sargon, or ED IIIa, the political influence of a king didn't extend far beyond the its immediate environs. Wars were rarely fought over long distances. The king was a hegemon, not a ruler. (Hamblin)

2600 B.C. saw the reestablishment of long distance trade and the construction of new monumental architecture in Sumer. It corresponds to the emergence of the Old Kingdom in Egypt, and the Early Harappan phase in the Indus Valley. Economic growth increased city-state conflicts in Sumer.

The first expansion of Sumerian trade was with the Indus valley via Northeast Mesopotamia, or "Subartu" (Weiss, ). Early trade with the Indus Valley civilization occurred along the inland route via Central Asia. Uruk was well positioned among the Sumerian cities to benefit from this inland trade.

Uruk overthrew Kish. They inherited the conquests of Kish, and overthrew it at an important time in the development of the Early Bronze Age.

ED II was the peak and final phase of Uruk civilization. Uruk subsequently became overshadowed by Ur.

Eridu, an important antediluvian city, became a large city during ED II, and a massive palace was constructed there. Adams, Robert McCormick (1966), *The Evolution of Urban Society*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), (Whitehouse, Ruth (1977), *The First Cities*, (Oxford: Phaidon).

ED III was the twilight of the Sumerian period of Mesopotamian history when Mesopotamian civilization was concentrated in the south, in Sumer. Political and military domination over all of Mesopotamia in

the subsequent era necessitated shifting the political center of Mesopotamia north to a more central location, i.e. Akkad and Babylon.

During ED III, Sumerian society diffused north as far as Syria. Uruk Civilization became Semiticized into Akkadian, and later, Babylonian civilization.

This diffusion of Uruk is shown by the spread of the Inanna cult, and other elements of antediluvian religion. Inanna/Ishtar became the prevalent deity in Mari, and later *the* patron deity of Akkad. Enki/Ea remained the father of Ishtar. Enki became the father of Marduk.

The upper Euphrates River passes through Syria. Excluding the coast of Syria as a distinct region, Syria-Mesopotamia should be viewed together in order to understand Mesopotamian politics. Technically, everything east of the Euphrates is Mesopotamia, and Syria should be viewed as the extreme upper limit of Mesopotamia. Syria was especially important for being the westernmost extent of the Euphrates river, and for connecting Mesopotamian commerce with Anatolia, the Mediterranean, and the Levant. These connections make it important for understanding western tendencies within Mesopotamian civilization.

Until the Middle Bronze Period, the focus of Mesopotamian politics was the unification of Syria-Mesopotamia. Syria was the most ambitious aspect of the Sumerian concept of conquering “four corners of the world”. Increasing political complexity over the Middle Bronze Age made the unification of Syria-Mesopotamia more impractical. The introduction of the Metals trade with Central Asia deemphasized the role of Syria as the primary objective of Mesopotamian conquests.

Syria and southern Sumer comprised the maritime regions of Mesopotamia, and as such, a maritime strategy.

The ED II Uruk diffusion occurred as the rebuilding and creation of the Second Mari Kingdom. Mari was situated halfway between Sumer and Syria. It was located there, on a previously uninhabited site, to monopolize on Sumerian trade. Its position was ideally located outside of the direct influence of both Sumerian and Syrian civilizations; exactly between them. It was positioned ideally to be involved both in Syrian and Mesopotamian affairs.

The intermediate position of Mari made it a hegemonic state in the early Dynastic period, and the prime candidate for shaping the subsequent order of both Syria and Mesopotamia during the Middle Bronze Age. Its importance subsided when Babylon was created.

Around 2500 B.C., the bulk of trade with the Indus Valley shifted from the Central Asian overland route to the Arabian Sea. Maritime trade allowed for an increased trade volume, and the Indus Valley Civilization was growing rapidly.

This shift to maritime trade was detrimental to Uruk. It benefitted Ur because it was the port city in the Persian Gulf. This could have been the reason for shifting balance in Sumer; Ur taking the kingship from Uruk.

During the Early Dynastic period, Sumerian city states fought for the hegemony of Sumer. Early Dynastic city states for most of this period were walled cities that controlled their immediate environs. Nobody actually ruled Sumer, or had the ability to control a large territory. They did, however, have cultural and religious unity. The ability to repel foreign invasions probably had to do with the title of King (Hamblin).

Towards the end of the Early Dynastic period, partly due to ongoing, internecine conflicts, some city states rapidly expanded their borders and managed to rule Sumer. The unification of Sumer was immediately followed by its political expansion into Northern Mesopotamia and Syria.

In the 25<sup>th</sup> century B.C. a ruler of Uruk claimed to have conquered all of Kish and Sumer.

The power of Uruk was eclipsed by Ur, and the kingship moved to Ur. Ur elevated the moon god Sin to supreme status in Sumer. The rivalry between Uruk and Ur exhausted those cities, after which there was a rivalry between Lagash and Umma for dominance.

5 kings later on the kings list is Lugal Ann Mundu of Adab. He is recorded as conquering from sea to sea, meaning from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf. His empire collapsed upon his death. The kingship passed to a dynasty of Mari, with six kings listed.

In the early 24th century, Lugal Zage Si of Umma is said to have conquered all of Kish and Sumer, and reached from sea to sea. While he didn't conquer these regions, he facilitated the creation of the Akkadian Empire, which did conquer them.

The uniting of Sumer was followed immediately by the conquests of Sumerians into Northern Mesopotamia and even Syria. This was detrimental to Mari. Mari would have been interested in prolonging the conflict between Sumerian city states. It could have done this by shifting its alliances, and through the influence of priests and divination. The Second Kingdom of Mari was destroyed by Sargon of Akkad.

While Sumerian city states gradually consolidated Sumer politically, Mari and Ebla were at war over the Middle Euphrates region during the 25<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> centuries. This conflict seems to have peaked, and probably exhausted both sides, just before the invasion of Sargon of Akkad.

Mari was rebuilt larger around 2500 B.C., after being abandoned for a few generations. It was located to monopolize trade on the Euphrates. This turned it into a preeminent commercial center. It was a multicultural and bilingual city, and the strongest Sumerian influenced city in Syria. Inanna was the primary deity worshipped in Mari. She was so popular that there were several variants of her worshipped in Mari.

Archives discovered at Ebla from this period have given us a good understanding of this time and place. The conflict between them Mari and Ebla persisted with Mari being predominant. It lasted until the conquests of Sargon.



Ebla was the dominant city in Syria when the war began. The threats and invasions of Mari finalized the consolidation of Syria into the First Eblaite Kingdom. The Eblaite kingdom is better described as a patchwork of cities allied with Ebla. The war also initiated the adoption of Kish or East Semitic political and cultural traits by Ebla (Weiss, ). Its new kingdom was modeled after Mesopotamian kingdoms, and it adopted cuneiform and bilingualism (Ibid.) Mari's war initiated the political transformation of Syria into an extension of Sumerian (or Kish) civilization.

Mari's archives stated that the war began during the reign of Ansud of Mari, c. 2423-2416 (Middle). Fortunes shifted between Mari and Ebla over the next century. Igrish Halam 2360 B.C. (Middle) paid tribute to Mari. Igrish Halam was when the archives discovered at Ebla begin. During this time, Mari invaded many cities and asserted its dominance in Northern Syria. This included Nagar.

Igrish Halam's son, Irkab Damu, stopped paying tribute after a few years. During his reign, actual power shifted from the king to the vizier. Ibrium became vizier during the last two years of his reign. Ibrium was vizier for 20 years and managed to make the position hereditary.

The archaeologist who deciphered the Eblaite script noted an interesting occurrence during the time of Ibrium. There was a shift from names that ended in –el, after the NW Semitic storm god, to names that ended in –Ya. He suggested that Ya was the earliest attestation of the Hebrew deity. It could represent the introduction of Ea, the Akkadian version of Enki, to Syria from Mesopotamia.

In year five of his reign, Isar Damu established a treaty with Nagar against Mari. However, Mari conquered Nagar and blocked the trade routes from Anatolia.

Almost 15 years later, Isar Damu made an alliance with Nagar and Kish against Mari. Mari was defeated near Terqa. However, Ebla itself would be defeated a few years later, probably by Himar of Mari. Sargon of Akkad invaded Syria within ten years.

Sargon was originally a servant of the King of Kish. He overthrew Kish and became its king in time to create both a northern and southern Mesopotamian Empire. Long term warfare between Ebla and Mari proceeded in a timeframe that allowed for both Sumer and Syria to be conquered by the same a foreign power. The establishment of Akkad as the capitol resembled that of other Semitic Empires, Kish and Babylon.

Ebla paying tribute to Mari coincided with the decline of Egypt during the last king of the 5<sup>th</sup> dynasty, Unas. Unas reign was an economic low point in Egypt. Large scale trade in Egypt resumed with the third king of the 6<sup>th</sup> dynasty, Pepi I Meyre r. 2332-2287. This was about the time that Irkab Damu ceased paying tribute to Mari, and the Eblaite Kingdom expanded to reach its maximum extent.

Mari could have influenced distant events through religion and prophecy. Mari was the source of travelling prophets called Nabi 'Utum.

The Akkadian Empire collapsed because of economic decay. It was followed by a long period of economic stagnation in the Middle East. Mari became an independent kingdom ruled by a Shakkanakku.

The end of the Early Bronze Age was a time of economic and urban decay throughout the Middle East, Anatolia, and the Eastern Mediterranean. A series of events led to the unraveling of the political and economic cohesion in the Middle East and connected regions.

The economic decay led to an influx of pastoral nomads into areas of civilization. These nomads were the Amorites in Syria, Hurrians in Northern Syria and Northern Mesopotamia, Canaanites in Egypt and Canaan, and the Gutians in Mesopotamia. Nomadic migrations caused further conflicts.

The Amorites in Syria are of particular interest because gradually spread throughout Syria, Mesopotamia, and even into Egypt. They dominated Middle Eastern politics in the transition to, and during the early Middle Bronze Age. The early Middle Bronze Age was especially an important time for the development of Near Eastern Civilization.

At the same time as the Amorites dominated Syria, Indo Europeans invaded Anatolia from either the Balkans or Caucuses. This created centuries of intense conflict in Anatolia that had a deteriorating effect on Anatolian Civilization. These conditions in Anatolia benefited Syrian and Mesopotamian Civilization in the long term. The Hurrians and the Amorites played an important role by containing Indo European invasions from Anatolia into Syria-Mesopotamia.

Nomads were a formidable military force. They were a persistent threat due to their lifestyle and subsistence. They lacked the vulnerabilities associated with sedentary existence. They could easily attack and withdraw.

During economic low points, long distance trade retracted to core economic centers and industries. There was an advantage to controlling these core enterprises and routes during these times.

In times of economic decay, rebellions and regional rivalries emerged. Gaining the support of the nomads was decisive factor in the ensuing conflicts. The use of nomads in conflicts was the first step of the process that created nomadic dynasties.

The position of Mari was adjacent to the Amorite homelands. Its continued interest in Syria and its relationship with the Amorites. Developing a relationship with emigrating nomads during these periods.

There were two kingdoms of Mari from 2200-1800, but with much continuity. The first one followed the Akkadian Empire and was ruled by kings that were called Shakkakanu, an Akkadian term for governor. Mari was nominally a part of Ur III, but continued to be ruled by a Shakkakanu, and was independent.

Mari remained an important commercial and cultural center in Mesopotamia during the Akkadian, Ur III and Amorite periods. However, Mari's central location became politically inferior towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Instead, adjacent regions fought for control of Mari and for the hegemony of Mesopotamia in the century preceding Hammurabi's empire.

In the Early Bronze Age, Sumerian and Akkadian society was larger than surrounding regions, and conquered outward into them. These adjacent regions gradually became more similar to Sumer. By the Middle Bronze Age, the situation reversed itself; adjacent regions were now in a conflict for the control

of central Mesopotamia, which lay in between them. These adjacent regions were Syria and Assyria, or Northwest and Northeast Mesopotamia, and Elam in the southeast. These more or less represented the regions where trade flowed in and out of Mesopotamia.

One of the reasons for this shift was the development of foreign civilizations, Egypt, the Indus Valley Civilization, and Bactria, and increased trade with them. This trend would continue in the second Millennium until Egyptians, Anatolians, and Indo Aryans were in a conflict for control of Syria and northern Mesopotamia.

The expansion of Indo European nomads from the Eurasian steppe became a major trend during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium B.C. This affected a broad swath of Eurasia from Central Europe to Northern India. Additionally, a new wave of Semitic nomads, Amorites, emanated from Syria and dominated the Middle East, like the Kish had done 1000 years earlier.

The migration of NW Semites southeast into Mesopotamia provided a powerful force that connected Syria and Mesopotamia into a single political and cultural zone during three separate periods. It allowed Sumero Akkadians and Babylonians to establish trade and alliances with people in Syria and the Levant and to pursue long term goals there. Sumerians had been active in Syria since the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium, and had relationships with nomads for almost as long. These things made it more mature than other competing civilizations it was competing with in the Near East and Syria during the Middle Bronze Age.

Syrian civilization collapsed in a similar timeframe to the Akkadian Empire. Amorites began to move into cities in Syria at this time. By 2050 B.C., Syria was ruled by various Amorite leaders.

The onset of the Middle Bronze Age in Mesopotamia was characterized by the gradual takeover of Mesopotamia by Amorites. Amorites gradually migrated into Mesopotamia from the northwest over a period of a century or more. They resided on the outskirts of civilization and interacted with it primarily through trade. They became an influential force as the Ur III empire began to degrade.

The Amorite takeover was an evolution of Sumero Akkadian civilization, not an external conquest. The Amorites fused with Sumero-Akkadian civilization and became a new military ruling class. The most lasting result of this fusion was Babylonian culture.

Mari was positioned adjacent to the Amorites homeland in Northeastern Syria. Amorites were traders. Mari's position as a commercial center between Syria and Mesopotamia meant that the Amorites were critical to its success. Utilizing nomads in warfare could be a decisive factor in uncertain times.

Amorites changed Mesopotamian society. Lands belonging to the kings or temples were given out. What followed was a period of enterprise, larger farmers and a merchant class.

Yamhad (Aleppo) remained a powerful kingdom during the remainder of the Amorite period. Yamhad's support was important to the rise of Babylon. The First Dynasty of Babylon treated the Yamhad dynasty as "brothers" or equals. Yamhad controlled Mari from the end of Yasmah Adad's reign until it was destroyed by Hammurabi.

Southern Mesopotamia or Sumer became divided into Amorite dynasties ruling from different cities. This was a recurrence of the common scenario of Sumer being divided into warring city states. Isin had overthrown Ur, making it more or less the successor of Ur III. It was the dominant city, but it was challenged in the south by Larsa. Larsa was supported by Elam and a shifting alliance of cities. The prolonged conflict between the two cities wore down both sides, which allowed for the rise of Babylon c. 1740.

Ibbi Sin (1963-1940 B.C. short) was the last ruler of Ur III. In an environment of constant Amorite attacks, regional cities became responsible for their own protection and affairs. The most important regional commander was Ishbi Erra, governor of Isin. His nickname was "The Man from Mari". His name meant that he was either from, or had been previously assigned to Mari. He became a dominant warlord and founded the Dynasty of Isin, the successor to Ur III.

Ishbi Erra was originally governor of Isin, subordinated to Ibbi Sin. Ishbi Erra proclaimed his independence and expanded his power base in the North. Ibbi Sin's downfall was concluded by the conquest of Ur by Elam. Ishbi Erra later drove the Elamites out of Ur and proclaimed himself king of Sumer and Akkad. He founded the Dynasty of Isin. The dynasty of Isin was dominant in Sumer until the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, and lasted until the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The decline of Isin began during the sixth king of Isin, Ur Ninurta (1859-1832 short). He was an usurper with a Sumerian name, unlike the other kings of the dynasty of Isin. However, it was during his reign that Larsa under an Amorite dynasty began to rival Isin for dominance, leading to its decline. Powerful Amorite kingdoms in the north emerged towards the end of the century; first Mari, then Yamhad and Assyria.

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the only kingdom in Mesopotamia not ruled by Amorites or Hurrians was Assyria. Shamsi Adad, an Amorite, conquered Assyria in 1809 B.C. He started a dynasty that lasted for 100 years.

Mari became a short lived hegemonic kingdom in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was ruled by the Amorite Lim dynasty. Its second king, Yahdun Lim, campaigned to the Mediterranean. He established an alliance with Eshunna and began to challenge Yamhad in Syria. However, the rise of Shamsi Adad turned his focus away from Syria, and before he could go to war against Assyria, he was assassinated. Shamsi Adad was able to install his son on the throne of Mari, and the king of Yahmad sheltered the members of the Lim dynasty.

Yamhad or Aleppo was the most powerful kingdom in the Near East at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Hadad, the principal god of the Amorites, was the patron deity of Aleppo.

Yahdun Lim was the first king of Aleppo, as early as 1805. Mari claims to have invaded Syria and defeated him. However, soon after, Shamsi Adad of Assyria conquered Mari in 1796. He made his son, Yasmah-Adad, king of Mari. The dynasty of Mari took refuge with Yahdun Lim of Aleppo, which angered Shamsi Adad. Yahdun Lim of Aleppo was succeeded by Sumuh Epu. (Hamblin, 258)

Shamsi Adad and his son created an anti-Aleppo coalition in Syria. It included Qatna, Carcimesh, and Urshu. Aleppo had few or no allies. It resisted this coalition, probably by creating alliances with Assyria's adversaries in Mesopotamia. (258-259)

Yarim Lim was the third king of Aleppo. He built up a coalition against Shamsi Adad in Mesopotamia. This included Ibalpi El of Eshunna and Hammurabi of Babylon. Shamsi Adad was now entirely surrounded in Mesopotamia. Yarim Lim is credited with saving Babylon during an attack by Shamsi Adad around this time. (259)

Shamsi Adad died and Assyria experienced a conflict over succession. Yarim Lim took advantage of the weakness of Assyria to invade Mari and place Zimri Lim's grandson on the throne, who was also named Zimri Lim. Yarim Lim's daughter married Zimri Lim. Mari remained a subject of Aleppo until it was conquered by Hammurabi in 1761. (259)

Yarim lim spent his last few years consolidating his power in Syria. When he died, he was the most powerful king in the Near East, excluding Egypt. (259)

The height of the Yamhad kingdom was during Yimri Lim and his succesor, Hammurabi I. Hammurabi was an ally of Hammurabi of Babylon, and provided support to him against Elam and Larsa.

Hammurabi founded the Babylonian Empire, began First Dynasty of Babylon. Babylon became the capitol of southern Mesopotamia. He created Marduk, the deity of Babylon.

Babylon was close to the previous Semitic capitol in Mesopotamia, Kish and Akkad. They were all located where the Tigris and Euphrates were closest to each other.

One of the reasons that Mari faded into obscurity in the subsequent period, besides the establishment of Babylon, was increased trade with Central Asian for tin. This coincided with the full implementation of tin Bronze by militaries in Western Asia, and a spike in the consumption of tin. Arsenic Bronze became obsolete in the Near East, and the only adequate source of tin was in Central Asia. This emphasized the eastern trade routes that terminated in the upper Tigris, and were the reason for the rise of Assyria during the Middle Bronze Age.

A recently discovered cassiterite mine north of Syria has changed the assumption that there were no exploited sources of tin in the ancient Middle East. The archaeological site is called Kestel. It was in use during the early Bronze Age, from 3250-1850. It was abandoned during the later part of Mari's existence.

Developments in 2<sup>nd</sup> millenium Bronze Age military technology occured primarily in the steppe region of Central Asia. This was due to the development of the horse driven chariot by the Sintastha culture, and the abundance of ores in Central Asia.

Indo Europeans domesticated the horse and adapted it for warfare when they were still located in the vicinity of the Pontic steppe. At the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Millenium, they expanded from this region in most directions. This divided them into several linguistic groups, depending mostly on who they came in contact with (Beckwith). It also placed them in important regions such as Anatolia and Central Asia. Their expansion at this time exhibited their superior military technologies, the result of competition in the steppe zone.

The first Indo European expansion out of the steppes coincides with the spread of the Amorites in Syria. What this means is that the end of the Early Bronze Age was characterized by the spread of nomadic warriors into regions of the oldest, most mature civilizations; The Near East, Mesopotamia, and Anatolia. Syria and Mesopotamia were more experienced in this regard, having already undergone transformations by the Kish and Akkadian nomads over the past thousand years.

The Sumerians may have also been a barbarian warrior class that was integrated into Mesopotamian society, according to Samuel Kramer.

The Sintashta Culture was the origin of the Iranian or Aryan peoples. They existed in the steppe region east of the Aral Sea, bordering Central Asia. They produced copper and arsenical bronze weapons on a large scale and traded them with the B.M.A.C. culture, which B.M.A.C. in turn traded with civilizations in the Near East and India. The Sintashta culture sourced their copper from a region in the southern Ural Mountains and also the B.M.A.C. culture itself.

Their advanced metallurgy relative to the steppe, and intense competition for grazing lands, made the Sintashta Culture into an unprecedented military culture. They developed the horse chariot some time before 2000 B.C.

The B.M.A.C. culture in Central Asia dates to around 2400 B.C. Its establishment coincides with the political maturation of Early Dynastic Sumer, and its increased demand for ores. The B.M.A.C. was the only source of tin for the Near East during most of the Bronze Age. Another possible source was Kestel, in southern Turkey, which seems to have operated from 3200 B.C. to 1800 B.C., but were not sure by whom.

Contact between the B.M.A.C. and Sintashta culture appears to have intensified c. 2000 B.C. Around 1900 B.C. Sintashta or other PIE people overran and occupied the B.M.A.C. B.M.A.C. sites at this time show nomadic horse burials and other I.E. customs, and shrank dramatically in size. The Indo Europeans appear to have amalgamated with parts of the B.M.A.C. culture because it seems to have contributed to their language and given them their religious customs (Beckwith). This amalgamation resulted in the Proto Iranian culture.

The Andronovo Culture that remained in the central steppes shared many similarities with the new Indo European B.M.A.C. culture to the south. The Andronovo expanded both east and west in the mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century until they were dispersed from the Urals to the Tan Shien mountains.

The Andronovo culture probably spread the horse and chariot across the steppes during this time. Steppe warfare then pushed defeated Indo Europeans outward into neighboring regions. By the mid 2<sup>nd</sup> Millenium, there were horse and chariot cultures invading Greece (Mycenaeans), Northwest India, and Mesopotamia. These movements probably pushed a similar Indo European people into Central Europe, the Tumulus culture, who became the Italic and Celtic peoples.

Indo European migrations occurred most dramatically at this time, during mid 2<sup>nd</sup> Millenium B.C. However, they continued to expand outward in phases over the remainder Bronze and Iron Ages until they had replaced most non-Indo European cultures in Eurasia. The transition into the mature Bronze Age for most of Eurasia occurred as the invasion or absorption of a new Indo European ruling class or warrior class.

The Indo European migrations created far reaching disruptions from the center of Asia as early as 2,200 B.C., but definitely by 1,600 B.C. It may be relevant to consider the advantage of residing in the periphal regions of Eurasia from an early time as this.

The Middle Kingdom of Egypt was established in 2055 B.C., following the First Intermediate Period. The height of the Middle Kingdom was during most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Egypt, therefore, shares a similar timeframe as the Amorite kingdoms in Syria and Mesopotamia. Other regions, like Anatolia, Central Asia, and North India were undergoing catastrophic changes.

The war chariot appeared in the Near East in Anatolia around 1700 B.C., followed soon after by Syria. The marshes, rivers and canal limited the spread of the war chariot to Babylonia. (Hamblin).

The Hyskos introduced the war chariot to Egypt. Around the same time, Indo Aryans with chariots invaded Northern India. In Mesopotamia, the technology facilitated the invasions of the Hittites and the Mittani peoples in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

The first Hittite Kingdom in Central Anatolia was formed around 1600 B.C. Its second king, Hattusila I, began a campaign in Syria. He claimed to have “reached the sea” and conquered Alakh. The third Hittite king, Mursili, succeeded at conquering Aleppo. After this, he marched 2,000 km to Babylon and sacked the city.

Mursili could not have governed Babylon from Hattusa, so the reason for the campaign isn’t clear. Precisely at this time, a civil war commenced in the capitol of Hattusa, and Mursili returned promptly.

The civil war in Hattusa was followed by a century long collapse of central authority. This concluded the brief first period of the Hittite Kingdom.

A Hittite alliance with Kassites may have been why Hittites sacked Babylon. The ultimate effect was the overextension and collapse of the Hittites. The Amorite cities in Syria regained their independence from Babylon.

The vacuum left by Mursili's invasion of Mesopotamia was filled in by other Indo Europeans; Indo Aryan Mittani and Kassites who invaded from the east. The Mitanni moved into the region of the Hurrians and conquered them. The Kassites conquered Babylon. These two people flanked Assyria; the Mittani to the north, and the Kassites to the south.

The origin of the Kassites is mysterious, but they were an Indo Aryan people. They quickly adopted Babylonian Culture, in contrast to the Mitanni, who conquered the Hurrians and expanded outward. Babylon experienced incredible stability with the transition to, and long duration of Kassite rule for the remainder of the Bronze Age.

The addition of the Mitanni and the Hittites as northern neighbors established a balance of power between Assyria and Babylon.

Additional participants in Syro-Mesopotamian politics created an increasingly complex situation that required centuries to conclude itself. This reduced the participation of Mesopotamians in Syria until the end of the Bronze Age, and gave the Amorites breathing space.

The Hyskos conquest of Egypt showed that Semitic civilization shifted westward after Hammurabi, in the mid 18<sup>th</sup>-mid 16<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C. It occupied Egypt and the Levant instead of Mesopotamia and the Levant. From the 18<sup>th</sup> century onward, the Habiru and Shasu nomads in Arabia and the Levant proliferated. This westward shift corresponded to the influx of Indo Europeans into Mesopotamia from the north and east, and the rise of Assyria in central Mesopotamia.

The decline of the Amorites in Mesopotamia and Syria was followed by the "patriarchal" migration into Canaan. The Amorites played an important part in the formation of Canaan around 1600 B.C. Once they were completely removed from Syria and Mesopotamia at the end of the Bronze Age, they remained in Canaan, and were the ancestors of the Hebrews.

The Semite occupation of Egypt delayed the establishment of Egyptian imperialism in the Levant. Egyptian imperialism in Syria began around 1500, about 50 years after the Hyskos retracted from Egypt.

Egypt expelled the Hyskos 1550. Egypt conquered Syria c. 1450, during the height of the Mitanni. Syria remained Egyptian until 1350.

Amurru was an Amorite kingdom first mentioned in the Late Bronze Age. It was located in southern Syria, on the border with Canaan. Its capitol was Qadesh. Amurru became very important in the late Bronze Age for being the border between the Hittites and the Egyptians. It was in an ideal position to negotiate with both sides. Its strategy as a buffer state preserved it.

Hittites became an Empire c. 1400. Tudiliya I reigned c. 1430-1400. Invaded the Mitanni. Expanded in both directions, first east then west.

After Tudiliya there was a low point. Suppiluliuma recovered empire and conquered the Mitanni c. 1350, then Syria. The Amurru switched their allegiance from Egypt to the Hittites at this time. This made the Hittites dominant in Middle East. The Egyptians lost Syria for the time being.



The defection of the Amurru to the Hittites at this time made inevitable the confrontation in the Battle of Kadesh, and subsequently, the decline of both empires.

The Middle Assyrian Empire began to expand at this time. This happened because the Hittites conquered the Mittani, and removed the primary adversary for both of them. The Hittites tried to prop up Mitanni against Assyria but it failed.

When Egypt contracted, this left a space in Canaan. The Bronze Age Collapse removed foreign imperialism in Canaan for five centuries.

The Bronze Age collapse was characterized by decentralization; the decline of imperial rule or of states, and the emergence of regional powers. The fragmentation of centralized states into regional centers ensured another long term period of conflict for hegemony. This guaranteed continued warfare, and also ensured that imperial power would remain weak or nonexistent for a prolonged period.

Yahmad: The fall of Yamhad to Hittites. After this, Amurru Kingdom emerged in southern Syria as a buffer between Hittites and Egypt. Its role as a buffer between these two powers preserved it until the end of the Bronze Age. It was where the Aramaeans expanded from during the Iron Age.

As the Middle Bronze Age progressed, a few new regional powers emerged in the Near East; the Egyptians, Hittites and Mittani. This created a new balance of power that delayed the establishment of a single imperial force in Syria and Mesopotamia. The Aryan invasion, and especially the creation of the Mittani Empire, delayed the establishment of Assyria as an imperial force.

From the late 16<sup>th</sup> to early 14<sup>th</sup> century, Assyria paid tribute to the Mitanni.

Syria became contested between the Hittites, the Egyptians, and the Mittani. Meanwhile, the decline of the Mittani state led to the rise of Assyria as an imperial force in the Near East.

The Egyptians and the Hittites fought an internecine conflict for Syria that ended in a stalemate. The Egyptians and the Hittites were worn down, and Assyria was posed to intervene. Assyria rapidly expanded at the end of the Bronze Age. The rise of Assyria ended the balance of power in the Near East. However, Assyria's expansion was immediately followed by the Bronze Age Collapse.

The Bronze Age collapse was caused by widespread invasions of sea raiders on the eastern Mediterranean civilizations. They ended all existing empires in the Eastern Mediterranean. They created a state of regional and tribal order in Anatolia, Syria, and the Levant.

This new environment allowed the NW Semitic city states in Syria to persevere, and also allowed for the independent development of the Israelites. It led to a renewed migration of NW Semites into Mesopotamia, like the Bronze Age migration of Amorites 1000 years earlier. This new patchwork of Semitic, trade-oriented nomadic tribes would resist Assyria again during the the Iron Age.

Bronze Age empires gave way to a more complicated social structure during the transition to the Iron Age. The Mycenaean Empire and the western part of the Hittite Empire were replaced by migrations driven by the Urnfield complex of Ukraine. The Urnfield complex, which became proto celts, were Indo European steppe warriors who settled on the lower Danube.

Egypt was ruled by another Sea People, Meshwesh Libyans, for 300 years beginning in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. The Levant was the site of multiple societies: Canaanites, Phoenicians, and Aramaeans.

Northwest Semites influenced by Mesopotamian society persevered against Bronze Age imperialism. The Levant continued to be the central focus of Near Eastern politics, but there were no empires in the Near East.

Aleppo became the greatest Amorite city-state before falling to Assyria in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. Hadad, Ba'al Hadad, or Ba'al became an important Iron Age deity.

Assyria did the leg work for a world empire. While smaller than its successors, it greatly reduced the political diversity of Western Asia; the Syro-Hittites, Phoenicia, Elam, and the Israelites. It also reduced ethnic pluralism, with long term effects towards political consolidation of the Near East. Cultures were suppressed and many of these people were relocated.

The Neo Assyrian Empire had three periods of great expansion. All of these occurred when Babylon was under nominal submission. Assyria and Babylon were odd bed-fellows in world conquest; Babylon watched while Assyria nearly conquered the world. It carefully guarded its autonomy, and maintained a balance of anti-Assyrian powers. It was always planning to, and at the critical points before Assyria reached too far (like the Arabian or Mediterranean Seas), it would trigger a revolt in Assyria or among its subjects.

This was the cycle of Assyro Babylonian conquest: Assyria commenced period of growth and then conquered Babylon. Conquering Babylon caused peace in Mesopotamia, so it could subsequently undergo far reaching conquests. At the peak of Assyrian expansion, Babylon would trigger a revolt in Assyria or among its subjects.

The early Iron Age was therefore a great drama between Assyria and Babylon. It culminated in the Persian Empire, ruled by newly arrived nomads and administered from Babylon.

Ashur Dan II (934-912) reestablished Assyria's traditional borders. Adad Nirari II (911-891) began to expand, and is considered the first king of the Neo Assyrian Empire. He began a policy of agricultural development. He defeated Babylon twice. The second time he made a treaty with Babylon, and the border of Babylon expanded Northwards a bit. The treaty led to 3 generations of peace between the two cities. Further evidence of an agreement is that Assyria campaigned to distant regions without have to worry about its southern border with Babylon.

The first great expansion occurred in the time of Aurnasirpal II (883-859). A coalition of states in Syria-Palestine was created to resist his rule. This caused a series of wars which resulted in Assyria defeating Damascus, marching to Israel and receiving tribute from it. His son was Shalmaneser III (859-824). He undertook similar Syrian campaigns. In 849 he conquered Carcemish. In 841 He defeated Hazael, but failed to completely take Damascus. He continued to the west to the Medditerranean, exacting tribute

from Israel and also the Phoenicians. By 832 he had invaded Cilicia and subjugated Tarsus. This was the peak of the first period of Assyrian expansion.

Marduk Zakir Zumi was king of Babylon from 855 to 819. His reign corresponded to Shalmaneser III of Assyria. Both were great and powerful kings. The Babylonian king had enough influence on Shalmaneser to engender contempt in Assyria. In 826 Shalmaneser's son rebelled against him. The fuel for the rebellion was anti Babylonian sentiment, aimed at Shamsi Adad and his dealings with Babylon. Assur Danin Pal had 27 cities join his cause, and unofficially ruled from Nineveh. The civil war lasted for four years. Shalmaneser appointed his other son Shamsi Adad V as regent in order to quell the rebellion. Marduk Zakir Zumi lent Shamsi Adad V the support he needed to defeat his brother. Shamsi Adad V became king and was greatly indebted to Babylon. He married Marduk Zakir Shumi's daughter Shammuramat. When Shamsi Adad V died in 811, Shammurat became regent for her son. She was the only Queen ever to rule Assyria. Most consider her regency to have been for five years, but some say until 789. [\(Reilly, Jim \(2000\) "Contestants for Syrian Domination" in "Chapter 3: Assyrian & Hittite Synchronisms" \*The Genealogy of Ashakhet\*\)](#) Her son, Adad Nirari III, succeeded her.

Shammuramat's legend persisted in Near Eastern and Greek culture. She was called Semiramis in Greek, and her son was called Ninyas. The likeness with Shammuramat and Nirari is clear. The occurrence of an Assyrian queen would be enough to capture the imagination of neighboring peoples.

At the end of Shalmaneser's reign, we can discern Babylonian and anti Babylonian parties. This manifested in his two sons. Assur Danin Pal ruled in Nineveh, with most of Assyria backing him, and Shamsi Adad V was supported by Marduk Zakir Zumi. Marduk Zakir Zumi outlived Shalmaneser by five years.

The first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. was a low point for Assyrian power. Adad Nirari III began to experience some of this, but it was mostly reserved for his successors. In the beginning of his reign, he had to put down rebellions. He led a siege of Damascus, and caused the demise of that kingdom. This resulted in Israel's independence, but it now paid tribute to Assyria instead.

Shalmaneser was succeeded by his three sons in the period from 783-745. Assyria fell into a dysfunctional state, its borders retracted, and it had little to no foreign influence. At the center of this turbulence was a conflict between the kings and the commander-in-chief, Shamsi-Ilu. Shamsi-Ilu was a noble Aramaean from the Bit-Adini tribe. As such, he had been made governor by Shalmaneser III when he invaded Bit-Adini. Shamsi-Ilu rose to commander-in-chief under Adad Nirari III. He came to wield enormous influence and challenged Adad Nirari's successors for power. Many governors and officials broke off from Assyria in this period. The kings would normally campaign annually after the harvest season, but in many years during this period, they were unable to.

During Assyria's low point in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, Urartu gained independence and expanded into a large kingdom. Its people had existed for some time to the north of Assyria, but were constantly dominated by Assyria. This kept them from developing into a kingdom. The first monarch of Urartu was Aram or Arame, in 858. Shalmaneser III destroyed its capitol, Arzashkun, in the 840s. Urartu entered into a period of obscurity until its 3<sup>rd</sup> king, Sarduri I, created a new capitol, Van, circa 830.

Sarduri I set the foundation for his son, Ishpuini I, to expand. This began in the turbulent last years of Shalmaneser III. It was during the period from 780 to 735, when Assyria was in its chaotic state, that

Urartu achieved far reaching conquests in the near East. It came to control northern Syria, cutting off Assyria from Anatolian iron. The Urartian hegemony exacerbated Assyria's problems.

One name for the city of Van used to be "founded by Semiramis".

Ashurbanipal (883-859 B.C.) led some campaigns into Syria and Phoenicia. They were short term and resulted in payments of tribute. Assyrian imperialism indirectly created the first Israelite Kingdom, Samaria, ruled by the Omride dynasty. It grew during the reign of Omri (c. 884-873), and its capital was at Samaria.

Omri was succeeded by his son, Ahab. Ahab is portrayed as wicked because of his marriage with Jezebel of Sidon. Jezebel was the daughter of Ithobaal I. Ithobaal had conquered Phoenicia in the same timeframe as the rise of Samaria, and by the same means of resisting Assyria. This made him a contemporary and nearby rival of Samaria. Jezebel and her patronage of Baal worship in Samaria no doubt represented the influence of Phoenicia in competition with a Babylonian-Israel policy.

Shalmaneser of Assyria (849-824) was less successful in Syria. Aram and Canaan rebelled in 853 B.C., but the ensuing battle seems to have been a draw. Shalmaneser campaigned in Syria three more times, but failed to take Damascus in the south. Some Assyrian vassals were maintained in Syria.

The weakness of both Shalmaneser and Shamsi Adad V in Syria, and the failed siege of Damascus led to the rise of Aram Damascus in the Levant. Aram Damascus conquered large parts of Syria and Israel in the later 9<sup>th</sup> century. The late 9<sup>th</sup> century was the political climax of Aramaean Syria. Samaria came under the influence of Damascus, which is why it is portrayed as so negatively in the bible.

The end of Shalmaneser's reign saw a civil war in Assyria. There was no Assyrian presence during the reigns of the regency of Semiramis and her son, Shamsi Adad V. This changed with Adad Nirari III (811-783), who conquered Aram Damascus.

The conquest of Damascus led to a revival of Samaria during the reign of its king, Jehoash (801-786). The peak of Samaria was around 765. (Roth, 1970)

Nabu Natsir of Babylon submitted to Tiglath Pileser III. The vassalship continued under Tiglath Pileser III's son, and the next Babylonian king Nabu Nadin Zir (744-3). This vassal only ruled for two years though, and was deposed by an insurrection. The anti Assyrian party prevailed during this time and its leader was Nabu-Shum-Ukin who ruled for two months until being ousted by a Chaldean. (Winckler, 1907)

A Chaldean on the throne in Babylon meant that Babylon would aspire to conquer Assyria. As soon as Assyria finished campaigning in Syria and had taken Damascus after three years, it turned south to Babylon. Ukin Zir was defeated and taken prisoner, during a standoff in his tribal lands, of the Bit Amukani.

It is at this point that Tiglath Pileser crowned himself king of Babylon, as well as his son Shalmaneser V. There was peace in Babylon during this period, in the last 2 years of Tiglath Pileser and during his son's reign. (Winckler, 115)

Shalmaneser V succeeded his father as King of Assyria and Babylon. However, he resided in Babylon and took the name Ullayu. This ended when his brother, Sargon II, led a rebellion in Assyria and became king. "Insurrections continued into the beginning of his reign, overall a period of conflict for Assyria" (Winckler 116).

Tiglath Pileser established a dual monarchy that made himself king of Assyria and Babylon under different names. This was done to appease the Babylonians. The system remained in place and was a source of ongoing tension. By 700 B.C., the Babylonians were in full revolt against Assyria. Sargon II razed the city and brought Marduk back to Assyria. Esarhaddon carried out an extensive rebuilding campaign in Babylon and sought a policy of appeasement.

Despite the far reaching conquests of Assyria, the primary strategic conflict for the Near East remained the unification of Syria-Mesopotamia. Similar to the Bronze Age, this conflict was between Assyria and Babylon, and then between Assyria and NW Semites.

Assyria pursued a strategy of expanding outward from its location in Northern Mesopotamia. Accordingly, the prevailing anti-Assyrian strategy was focused in the extremities of Syria and Mesopotamia. These extremities were southern Babylonia, or Chaldea, and the southern Levant. These locations had a logistical advantage by being the most distant from Assyria.

The distance was important for timing; Assyria removed mutual enemies intermediate to both of them, and reached these extremities last.

Southern Babylonia, or the Sealand, was fortified by its marshy terrain and tidal waters. Samaria and Jerusalem were in fortified, mountainous locations. The southern Levant was most important for being the land bridge between Asia and Egypt. This was another reason why a Babylonian alliance with Israel or Judah was important.

Assyria had to subdue Babylon before it could begin periods of expansionism. Continued expansionism relied on the ongoing subjugation or cooperation of Babylon. Babylon could arrest or reverse Assyrian expansion by rebelling, and would occasionally destabilize the whole empire. Babylon often led rebellions involving many Assyrian subjects.

Babylon cooperated or rebelled against Assyria in order to manipulate the timing of Assyria's descent into the Levant. Due to their similar distance and Babylon's subversion of Assyria, Babylonia and the southern Levant were conquered by Assyria in a very similar timeframe.

Stopping or reversing Assyrian conquests created vacuums along the Assyrian frontiers. These vacuums created prime political opportunities that were exploited by Babylon in the places that were a part of its own strategy.

The development of Yawhist monotheism, first in Samaria, and then Judah, probably represented Babylonian foreign policy in Israel. The periods when Assyria dominated by Babylon the most were when the Hebrew kings were most “wicked”, or uncooperative with the Hebrew prophets. The periods when Babylon was most free from Assyrian control were conversely when Yahwist monotheism was successful in Judah. The primary goal of Babylon in the southern Levant was for it to rebel against Assyria in coordination with Babylon, and to resist Egypt. This was more or less what the biblical prophets said.

Marduk Baladin was a Chaldean who controlled Babylon from 722-710, and again in 703-2. He removed Assyrian control of Babylon for most of this period. He led an anti Assyrian alliance comprised mainly of Aram, Israel, and Elam.

Judah became significant after Samaria or Northern Israel fell to Sargon in 722. Prior to this, archaeological record shows that it was a sparsely inhabited location (Brittanica.com).

The King of Judah during the fall of Samaria was was Ahaz. The main contemporary prophets were Isiah and Jeremiah. Ahaz is portrayed as wicked in the Bible for ignoring Isiah and cooperating with the Assyrians.

The next king of Judah was Hezekiah. He is accredited as being the first to mandate monotheistic worship of Yahweh. Isiah encouraged Hezekiah to enter into an alliance with Egypt and rebel. Sennacherib invaded once and Hezekiah surrendered. However, he invaded a second time and was defeated. Assyria didn’t invade again in the reign of Hezekiah.

It was during the reign of Sennacherib that Babylon started to constantly revolt. Babylon preoccupied Assyria and relieved Hezekiah, allowing him to defeat Sennacherib. Babylon would be regularly in a state of revolt for the remainder of Assyrian rule. Isiah was part of a larger Anti Assyrian strategy involving Babylon.

One opinion is that monotheism was developed in Northern Israel or Samaria in the decades before it fell to Assyria. After Samaria fell, the development of monotheism was transferred south to Judah. The development of monotheism by this account was a political structure prompted by the Assyrian hegemony. It could have been the diplomatic tool of Babylon.

Judah was preserved as it was in later times, by switching sides between Egyptians and Asians.

Babylon led a rebellion against Assyria during its peak. The Neo Assyrian Empire became divided between Babylon and the Medes. The Medes expanded into Anatolia and fought the Phrygians. However, the location of the Medes made them succumb to the Cimmerian and Scythian invasions from the North and East, and be overthrown by the Persians, who had been allies of Babylon for the last century.

Chaldean rule in Babylon was harsh, but was preferable to Assyrian rule.

## **Persia**

Iranians are first mentioned by Assyrians in 869 B.C. Iranians were in two main groups. One was Media, in Iran, and the other was in Parsus. Until 670 B.C. they (both?) paid tribute to Assyria when demanded to. In 670 Deioces was the first Median King to gain independence and set up a Median Kingdom.

Teispes was the son of Achaemenes, the legendary founder of the Achaemenids. They both were rulers of Persis. Teispes captured the city of Anshan from the Elamites. He divided his kingdom to his sons. Cyrus I was given Anshan, while Ariaramnes was given Parsa. Ariaramnes was defeated by the Medes and became a vassal. His son, Arsames, was also a vassal to the Medes. Ariaramnes began a separate Achaemenid line, which Darius I would belong to.

In 652 B.C. the king of Babylon, Shamash-Shum-Ukin, revolted against his older brother and suzerain Ashurbanipal, King of Assyria. Cyrus I is mentioned as an ally of Babylon. The war ended in 648 B.C. Babylon was defeated and Shamash-Shum-Ukin reportedly committed suicide. Cyrus continued to be a vassal of Assyria.

Cyrus II was the liberator of Babylon from the Nabonidushju;l. Nabonidus was an Assyrian who was apithetic towards Babylonian culture. He had confiscated the religious idols of Babylonia and stored them in Baylon. Babylon opened its gates Cyrus in 538 B.C. The Nabonidus chronicle, written by the priests of Marduk, shows their pro-Cyrus position.

The Persian Empire combined the Babylonian and Medes Empires. This created an enlarged successor to the Assyrian Empire. The conclusion of Assyrian-Babylonian rivalry in Mesopotamia created an unprecedented period of prosperity in the Middle East. The inheritance of the Medes and Babylonian Empires meant that they controlled both the maritime and caravan routes, or the interior and exterior routes across Western Asia.

The continued presence of Phoenicians in Syria compelled the Assyrians and Persians to focus on Anatolia as their Mediterranean terminus. The focus on Anatolia by the Persians was also due to the incompleteness of their conquest of Egypt. The Assyrian Royal Road to Ionia became the Persian Royal Road.

Babylon was the administrative capitol of the Persian Empire. The Persian Empire was a Babylonian Empire during the first half of its existence. The peak of the Persian Empire was the last Babylonian renaissance.

#### Assassination of Darius

Beginning in the late Babylonian period, the banking family of Egibi rose to control much of Babylonian commerce. The Egibi are the earliest known example of finance. The discovery of the family archives has given a multitude of records, spanning the period from 620-480 B.C. The first Egibi was probably active around 700 B.C.

They appear to have risen to prominence as during the reign of Nebbuchadnezzar II by providing financial services to the King. Nebuchadnezzar distributed land to soldiers as payment. He sought to

create larger farms to free up more men into service. The Egibi managed these lands for the absent soldiers.

They remained close to the kings and became a sort of national bank. During the usurpation of Bardys the Magi, evidence of them ceases. It returns with the reign of Darius (Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, Volume 5, London and Middlesex Archaeological Society 1881 p. 258). The king's patronage of them coincides with good Jewish-Persian relations and the rebuilding of the Temple, and is opposite to Zoroastrian influence.

The fourth and fifth generation of Egibi were the height of the family's fortunes. They corresponded to the expansion and height of the Persian Empire under Darius. They became active in all areas of the economy in Babylonia. The success of the Egibi comes from their close relationship with the nomadic dynasties, the Chaldeans and Persians.

Phrygians migrated from the Balkans during the Bronze Age collapse. The people whom they descended from in the Balkans were called the Bryges. They spoke a similar language as the Greeks. As soon as the Hittite Empire collapsed from Sea peoples, of which they may have been one, they settled in its northern regions, in north-central Anatolia. They were a power in this region from 1200-700 B.C.

After Urartu's high point in the mid 8<sup>th</sup> century, the Phrygian kingdom experienced its peak. This was directly west of Urartu, in central Anatolia. This was under the legendary king Midas. Midas was the last king though, and afterwards it fell to the Cimmerians.

At some point in its history, Phrygia adopted the Mesopotamian cult of the "Mother Goddess". There were unmistakable Mesopotamian influences. To begin, there is the Phrygian river god, Sangarius. The daughter of Sangarius is Nanna. Sangarius is like Enki, the Water god from Eridu. The daughter of Enki was Inanna, which sounds like Nanna. Additionally, there is a connection between the Hermaphroditic priests of both Inanna, and Nana's offspring Attis.

After the collapse of Phrygia, it was replaced by the Lydian Empire to its west. This was when the Lydian Mermnad dynasty arose. Lydians founded their kingdom and opened the Royal Road to Assyria and Urartu. The Lydians introduced the Ionians to the riches of Asia.

Lydia was locked in a war with the Ionians. The Cimmerian invasion occupied Lydia, who barely managed to overcome the Cimmerians. The Ionians were relieved of Lydian tyranny by the Cimmerian invasions, and the Lydians buffered them from the Cimmerians.

Ionians had become enriched by the development of Lydia and the introduction of Assyrian commerce. This was the "Assyrian Royal Road". Its society developed in complexity and wealth so that when the Persians were ready to conquer that region, the Ionians were a formidable obstacle to them. The Ionian league was formed in order to counter to Persia.



The significance of Ionians in Near Eastern politics was to prevent Persia from reaching “from sea to sea”. The Ionians were to Persia, what the Babylonians and Aramaeans were to Assyria in the early Iron Age.

From about 650-550, a number of Greek tyrannies arose that were sympathetic to each other. The first ones may have been Ionia, but there are only a few mythological references to them (Bury, p. 140). Their inspiration would have been the opulent court of Sardis in Lydia (Ibid).

Corinth hosted a temple to Aphrodite. It was situated on a prominent raised location, like the Acropolis of Athens, but instead it was used for prostitution. It had 1,000 temple prostitutes. Aphrodite, and the practice of temple prostitution, had their origins in Mesopotamia as the Sumerian Ishtar and Innana religious cults.

Among the Bacchiadae expelled by Cypselus was Demaratus, the father of the fifth king of Rome.

Thales was most famous for his advice to Milesians not to fight alongside Croesus. This way, Lydia was defeated and Ionia became the front line against Persia.

Babylon fell to Persia in 538 B.C. Cyrus allowed Jews to resettle Judah. Darius recommissioned the building of the Temple.

Persia achieved its maximum territorial extent during Darius I. It covered a region that had expanded upon the Assyrian Empire. It introduced Near Eastern imperialism to the Mediterranean and India. Its extension into these regions was an extension of Middle Eastern hegemony into them. This prompted a new economic and political development phase for them.

Events triggered by the Persian Empire seem to have happened in India faster than in the West. This was important because it led to the consolidation of India by Ashoka in 280 B.C., and the subsequent prosperity of India enriched the Greeks, especially Egypt.

When the Persians invaded the Indus valley in 512 B.C., India had been comprised of many small kingdoms for less than a hundred years. The Persian threat in Northwest India changed the balance of power in Northern India. Pataliputra in Central India exploited the Persian occupation of the Indus Valley to expand into an empire.

There were probably two separate periods of Babylonian revolts. The first one began in the second year of Xerxes reign, and the second one is more difficult to ascertain an exact date. The revolt of Babylon would have been a critical loss to the Persian Empire.

The details of the Babylonian revolts are mysterious. It is known that there were two rebels, one in the North and one in the South. The rebellion began with them fighting each other. Samas Eribas prevailed, and it was probably him who was then put down by the Persians. The Egibi in Babylon would have aided Samas Eriba.

There was a Pro-Persian party prior to the rebellions, and their fate was opposite from that of the rebels. When the rebellions were crushed, the rebel aristocrats were removed from their temples and replaced with pro-Persian officials. Caroline Waerzeggers *Archiv für Orientforschung* Bd. 50 (2003/2004), pp. 150-173 Jstor

The Babylonian revolts were a great loss for the existing Babylonian society. The city became dominated by Persians. This represented the extension of Persian influence westward and the retraction of Semitic influence from the east. This makes the revolts a logical end point for the Babylonian captivity of the Jews, as represented by the movement of Ezra and his scribes to Jerusalem.

After Xerxes, Aramaic became language for administration in the Persian Empire. Around this time, they also adopted the 365 day Solar Calendar, itself Babylonian.

The Persian threat, and the rivalries funded by Persia, weakened Greece and its colonies. It arrested the westward colonization of the Greeks. After 470 in Magna Graecia, the Greeks began losing to the native Oscan speakers, and also the Iapygians from the east. The Iapygians were related to Illyrians, and had come in the 10<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

In 467, the Messanians, an Iapygian people, defeated Greek Tarentum. The defeat was so severe that the Pythagoreans were overthrown by a democratic revolt. In 421, Oscans took over Cumae, but they appear to have coexisted with the Greeks.

In 466, the oligarchy of Syracuse was overthrown by a Democratic uprising.

Corinth was a driving force in western colonization. Its main colony was Syracuse, in Sicily, the largest Greek city in the West. Syracuse achieved a naval victory over Etruria in 474, making it prominent in the Western Mediterranean. Sicily was the focus of the war with the Phoenicians for dominance of the Western Mediterranean.

The Persian wars arrested the western progress of Corinth for 50 years. After Hieron died around 466, Syracuse fell into disarray over succession. After the Peloponnesian War, Syracuse again became the strongest regional power. Dionysius the elder, d. 367, exerted his influence northward to Naples and Magna Graecia. Sparta, which was usually hostile to tyrants, closely supported Dionysius.

Around 385, Syracuse was allied with Epirus.

In 367, Carthage and the Etruscans formed an alliance against Taranto's hegemony of Magna Graecia.

The Macedonian conquest of Central Asia displaced the Sarmatians into Siberia and Mongolia. The Greeks and Sarmatians initiated the Iron Age in Siberia and Inner Mongolia. The Sarmatians, with new heavy cavalry, first dominated Mongolia in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. These things hastened the consolidation of Mongolia by the Xiongnu, an early Hunnic people. The Xiongnu then pushed the Sarmatians westward into Scythian or the Russian Steppe.

They Xiongnu prompted the unification of China by the Han dynasty. The Xiongnu also drove the Yuezhi into Bactria. These events were important to the timing of the opening of the Silk Road, which had profound effects on the wealth and political situation in the Near East. Notably, the Silk Road was not created before the establishment of the Hasmonean Kingdom in Israel.

The movement of the Yuezhi into Central Asia created a new nomadic empire in Bactria, Samarkand, and Northern India. They became the first Central Asian Empire. This development divided West Asia roughly into three parts, the Kushans, Parthians, and Romans. This division benefited Rome, with whom they were close allies, and was detrimental to Parthians, or to Persia. When the Kushans declined in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, contemporaneously with Rome and China, Sasanid Persia reestablished a Middle Eastern hegemony.

The timing of Alexander's campaigns were after the final revolt of Sidon was put down. This was important because Persia had completely removed the Phoenicians from Asia. After conquering Egypt and Sidon, the Persians would likely have conquered Judah next.

Macedonians were barbaric compared to other Greeks.

The division of the Persian empire by the Macedonians initiated a new phase of divide and conquer in the Near East.

Ptolemy was the most senior commander of Alexander. His choice of Egypt indicated that it was the most sought after region in the Macedonian Empire.

Ptolemy I added to the Levant to the Ptolemaic Kingdom during the wars of the Diadochi. He built up a large navy and made Egypt the dominant power in the Eastern Mediterranean. During the high point of the Ptolemies, they even controlled the Seleucid port in Syria. The Ptolemaic kingdom therefore controlled the Near East in the mid 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Ptolemy III died in 221 B.C. The Kingdom experienced a steep decline. A series of ineffectual and indulgent kings followed.

In 222 B.C. The Seleucids obtained a reversal in their broader fortunes. Antiochus III led a vast campaign to recover territories. He almost restored the empire of Seleucus I. He started in central Anatolia in 216, Armenia (Xerxes) in 212, and Parthia in 209. All of these recognized his suzerainty. Arsaces I of Parthia had died in 211. In 208, Antiochus III attacked Euthydemus I of the Greco Bactrian Kingdom.

In 200 B.C., in an alliance with Macedon, Antiochus defeated the Ptolemies and gained control of the Levant. Antiochus marched into Europe to claim Greece and unite the Hellenic world. It was here that he was introduced to the Roman force. He was defeated at Magnesia in 190 B.C.

After this defeat, the Seleucids were no longer able to tend to affairs in the East. Parthians expand west.

The Jews shifted their alliance from the Ptolemies to the Seleucids in 200 B.C. Antiochus III was friendly to the Jews. He resettled 2000 Jews from Babylon to Lydia and Phrygia. He lowered their taxes and subsidized the Temple. Seleucus IV (187-175 B.C.) was also friendly to the Jews. He also subsidized the Temple.

Antiochus IV became king in 175 B.C. He is known for the forced Hellenization of Jews. Because the Seleucids were no longer involved in Egypt, he no longer needed the support of the Jews in Judea.

The development of Egypt and other peripheral regions during the Hellenistic era; chiefly the Mediterranean, Central Asia, and Mongolia, meant that the era of Mesopotamian hegemony was over. The successor states to the Hellenistic kingdoms emerged in the early to mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C., and were built around a new order; influence in the Middle East became divided into thirds, represented by Rome, Parthia, and the Kushans.

The Jews took advantage of this new division of the Middle East to assert themselves and create their first independent kingdom known to history. They did this by allying with the Parthians and the Romans against the Seleucids. By supporting more remote powers, rather than more proximal ones, they prolonged the inevitable domination by foreigners.

Timeline of Parthian, Maccabees and Hasmoneans.

Ashoka died in 232. The Indo-Greek political order of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century declined. It was the beginning of Rome and China, or a “Mediterranean-Mongolian” political trend.

The collapse of the Mauryan Empire in 185 B.C. Post Hellenistic political Near East. Seleucid Vacuum 190-100 B.C.

After Alexander Balas, his son, Antiochus VI, and his supporters held out in Antioch. Demetrius II was in Damascus, so this was a Damascus-Antioch split.

Pergamom was a strong kingdom in Anatolia. Mithradites founded Bosporan Kingdom. It expanded towards the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century into the “kingdom of Pontus”, conquering most of Anatolia and the Black Sea. This brought it into conflict with Rome for Syria. .

Armenia was the largest Seleucid successor. Tigranes the great 95-55 B.C. Becomes an ally variously of Rome or Persia for the next 500 years.

Third Mithridatic War 73-63 B.C. Pontus and Armenia ally against Rome, but Rome defeats Armenia and makes it an ally.

Hellenistic Judaism was the apex of political and cultural developments in Iron Age Mesopotamia. Besides scholarship and religious legal areas, they had a central role in long distance commerce, and a religion that gave them a claim to the most strategic region in the Near East.

The proverbial Jewish merchant surfaced during the Hellenistic era, when the Mediterranean became politically and economically incorporated into the Middle East. They were a class of people in the Near

East that predated the Greeks and sought to maintain exclusivity in the face of Greek sovereignty. They were able to exploit Hellenistic rule to become wealthy and influential.

The exponential growth of the Jewish diaspora in the Hellenistic era created the need for decentralized religious institutions. This was probably the beginning of the trend that developed into Pharisaic and later Rabbinical institutions. Representing the diaspora, these institutions were more evolved and dynamic than the traditional Jewish temple theocracy that they were pitched against. The former was mobile and dynamic, while the latter was more anchored, and could be more easily conquered by a foreign power.

Antiochus IV began the sixth Syrian war. The Roman's demanded that he permanently withdraw from Egypt. Egypt became a protectorate of Rome.

The Seleucid's eclipsing by Rome eliminated its prospects for Egypt. Judah was no longer a buffer state for the Seleucid Empire, so the Jews lost their bargaining power. Eastern and western prospects dwindled for the Seleucids, and compelled its annexation of the Southern Levant.

The decay of Alexandria and the conquests of the Parthians in Mesopotamia made the Palestinian Caravan routes the most viable alternative for oriental trade in the coming decades. The conquest of Edom by Hyrcanus around 110 B.C. put Jews in control of the second most direct Indo Arabian trade route with the Mediterranean; the route that went through Palestine.

The creation of a Jewish kingdom meant that the religious establishment had to deal with kingly authority in the way that it had dealt with foreign interference. The Sadducees and Pharisees outwardly appeared when the Hasmoneans claimed the position of High Priest for themselves in addition to being kings. In this way, the Pharisaic cause represented the perpetual theme of religious versus kingly authorities.

Concurrent with Rome in the west, the Parthians undermined Seleucids in the east. The Jews allied with these two powers to become the most powerful state in the Levant within 50 years.

Beginning around 169, Antiochus sought to conquer Judea. This created an organized Jewish resistance in the form of conservative religious pietism. Tensions reached a flash point in 167, and a full fledged revolt broke out. A large Syrian army from Antioch was defeated by the rebels.

The development of Hasmonean Judah should be viewed in relation to the declining situation for the Jewish diaspora, especially in Alexandria. Alexandria was the most important economic and political development in the west during the prior century, and was the largest center of Judaism. The same inertia that made Jewish culture flourish in Ptolemaic Alexandria probably allowed it to follow subsequent trends.

Judah had remained largely independent by its intermediate role in the Ptolemaic-Seleucid conflict for the Levant. The collapse of the Ptolemaic kingdom created a large vacuum in the eastern Mediterranean that Rome wasn't ready to fill yet. To prevent domination by the Seleucids, it was necessary to establish an opposition to them in the Near East.

The traditional view of Jewish politics as portrayed in the Bible and by Josephus has merit. In actuality, though, the situation was more complicated, with Pharisees and Sadducees being further divided into groups themselves.

The prominent explanation for the Essenes is that they were a group of Sadducees who were disassociated from the temple. This is interesting because they were neither a popular movement like the Pharisees, or the current aristocracy supporting the Temple. This makes the Essenes a good candidate for the type of ecumenical, dynamic institution that developed Christianity. Christianity seems to have existed in an early form within their community. They could have represented a party consisted largely of Alexandrian Jews who were adapting to the decline of Alexandria by establishing themselves in Judah.

When the Parthians heard about the Maccabean revolt they took the opportunity to seize Herat. This gave the Jews a break from hostilities.

The Syrians made three unsuccessful attempts but were defeated by the rebels. The rebels retook the temple from the Hellenizers. In 164, the resumption of temple activities took place. (Potok 254-256)

The Parthian Empire was a Hellenistic kingdom until the first century AD. Parthian Kings styled themselves as Philhellenes and had Greek descent. They used Greek on their coins. Volgases I was the first Parthian king to reject Hellenism. He used native Parthi script on coins. He patronized the Magi and sponsored the compilation of Zoroastrian texts. Around this time though, the Alans attacked the Parthian empire from the north and northeast.

The Near East was now divided between more distant powers. The Hasmonean Jews were in a better position than their more ancient counterparts because their potential suzerains, Rome and Parthia, were further away than Egypt or Assyria. This delayed the inevitable domination by Rome. When Rome eventually conquered Judah, its distance limited its ability to influence the Near East in such a way that prior ancient Empires had. This distance was an important component of the development of monotheism, with its bold political assertions, in the Near East.

West Asia was connected to the Mediterranean and Mongolia by the conquests of Alexander. The development of these regions was delayed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C., while the consolidation of India and the golden age of Ashoka took place. However, the late 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries saw rapid political consolidation of the Mediterranean and Mongolian regions. Over the second century, power was reoriented to these regions so that they subsequently became the most decisive regions in Eurasia throughout the first millennium.

The Mediterranean was the ancient world's "largest marketplace". It also had the advantage of being isolated when compared to Mesopotamia or other interior regions. These factors made it usually be the

suzerain of the Near East and Egypt; a role which made it the successor of ancient Mesopotamian civilizations.

Mongolia had expansive fertile land and was proximal to China. China in the first millenium was more populous and wealthier than the Middle East and Europe. By the end of the ancient period, Mongolia became the base of ever larger nomadic empires in Asia. These empires fought for the hegemony of Mongolia, Northern China, and Central Asia.

There were four Mongolian Empires before 1000 A.D.; the Xiongnu, Xianbei, Avars, and Turks. Medieval warfare in Mongolia sent regular waves of migrants across the steppe. It accelerated after 750 and climaxed in the few centuries around 1000 A.D. These in turn displaced others nomads into areas of civilization, with drastic effects.

Because these migrations were the prevailing trend in Medieval Eurasia, the Abrahamic religious establishment made it its most essential strategy. The peak of the effects of the migrations on the west, or the point when migrations reached furthest west, were when Judeo Christianity and western maritime civilization relocated and expanded westward.

Nomadic migrations from the Far East would overturn Asian civilizations, and then fall on the doorstep of Western Civilization. The location of Western Civilization on the western periphery gave it a great advantage in this scenario. Its adversaries to the east, and in the interior regions, would be burdened by the nomadic invasions.

This advantage of isolation made Western Civilization prevail over Silk Road Asian Civilizations. China, India, the Middle East, and Russia were regularly invaded.

When the nomads did manage to reach the west, their invasions were used to maximum advantage in internal western politics. Judeo Christianity appears to have made this a central part of its strategy, like Babylon previously did. It successfully coordinated a long term strategy with the climax of nomadic invasions in the west, and always fully exploited their effects.

Peripheral regions such as the west had an easier time generally in defensive matters, versus a centrally located region like Central Asia or Mesopotamia, which must be defended from all sides.

#### The Near East as a Roman Parthian Buffer

A number of small kingdoms arose in the Near East during the period between Seleucid and Roman imperialism. A small strip of Semitic kingdoms in Syria-Mesopotamia, mostly concentrated in Syria, served as buffer states between Rome and Parthia. Due to this role, they were able to maintain a large amount of independence. They were wealthy because they were located on the western end of the Silk Road. Jews were active in many places around the Near East, not just in the Mediterranean.

The largest power to succeed the Seleucid Empire was Armenia. Tigranes the Great (r. 95-55 B.C.) expanded its borders from the Mediterranean to the Caspian Sea. There were also smaller Armenian

states north of Syria, like Commagene and Sophene. Adiabene was a short lived Jewish kingdom which controlled a strategic route on the upper Tigris.

Judah was initially notable for its location more than its wealth. It was a fortified, mountainous region in the southern Levant. This made it one of the last places in the eastern Mediterranean to be conquered during many different periods of history. Egypt was the last place to be conquered, and the southern Levant the second to last in ancient Near Eastern politics.

The Hasmonean Kingdom's conquest of Edom made it in control of the most critical caravan route in the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C. This made Judah extremely wealthy and influential even after it was conquered by the Roman Empire. Judah's strategic location, now coupled with its caravan monopoly, made it outlive other Semitic states in Syria and Mesopotamia.

As soon as Phraates II was victorious against Demetrius I, the eastern part of his realm was threatened by new invaders. The Indo Scythians and Yuezhi had overrun and conquered the neighboring Greco Bactrian kingdom. By 129 B.C., they were pressing on the borders of the Parthian Empire. Phraates had to abandon his plans for Syria and Mesopotamia. He hastily appointed his trusted commander, Himeros, to be governor of Babylon. Phraates II was killed in battle against the Saka and Yuezhi.

Himeros treacherously ruled Babylon. He committed numerous atrocities against the population. He burned the main temple and destroyed large swathes of the city. High-level Babylonians were sold into slavery. Because of his character, his rule appears to have been very short. Within a year, Hyspaosines returned to Babylonia and overthrew Himeros.

By this act, Babylonia gained its independence. Hyspaosines was the first king of Cheraene, or Mesene. Cheraene didn't actually stretch as far north as Babylon, but included most of Babylonia. Its capitol was around Charax Spasinou, the Hellenistic Arabian port built by Alexander, and the primary port for Babylonia's Indo-Arabian trade during Hellenistic and Parthian times. The kingdom remained semi-autonomous throughout the Parthian Empire. It was eventually absorbed by Persia during the Sasanid revolution. Cheraene maintained its own kings and probably had a vassal status with the Parthians. It occasionally joined with Rome against Parthia.

The Roman conquest of the Mediterranean lasted until 100 B.C. This was followed by regular civil wars. Because of these events, it wasn't able to assert its rule in Syria and the Levant until 63 B.C. Jews sided with the Populares against the Optimates.

Wars with Carthage from 264 to 146 B.C., the Kingdom of Pontus from 88 to 63 B.C.

Pompey defeated Mithridates in 63 B.C. He removed the last Seleucid from Antioch. He entered Jerusalem and laid siege to the Temple. After two months, he broke through and murdered 12,000 Jews. Pompey didn't disturb the contents of the Temple, and gave it back to the Jews. He chose Hyrcanus II as a weaker client of Rome. The Romans now exercised authority in Judea.

In 61 B.C., Pompey brought a large amount of captives to Rome. This started a substantial Jewish community. They were settled on an island in the Tiber because they were mistrusted.



Julius Caesar returned to Rome in 60 B.C. after finishing a term as the governor of Hispania. He organized the Triumvirate in order to oppose the Senate. It included Pompey and Crassus. Caesar was at war with the Gauls from 58-51. In 53 B.C., Crassus was killed during his disastrous campaign with the Parthians.

Eventually, the Senate came to back Pompey against Caesar.

Caesar entered Rome in 49 B.C. He was victorious and Pompey fled to Egypt. In order to gain favor with Caesar, Ptolemy VIII's advisors decided to assassinate Pompey. Caesar did not retaliate the favor. He sided with Cleopatra, with whom he had a child.

Achillas, Ptolemy's advisor, led 22,000 troops, and besieged Caesar and Cleopatra at Alexandria. Caesar had a very small force and was overwhelmed. He wrote to his ally, Mithridates of Pergamum, for reinforcements. Antipater provided 3,000 soldiers and enlisted 2,000 Nabataeans. Antipater also secured the support of the Jews in the Land of Onias as well some local rulers. The troops of Mithridates were anticipated and flanked, but the Jews caused Egyptians to surrender and freed Caesar.

Caesar lifted the laws and taxes imposed by Pompey on the Jews, and allowed them to rebuild their walls and fortifications. He made Mithridates king of the Bosporan Kingdom.

The conquest of the Mediterranean basin by Rome was the consolidation of this significant region by a single, hellenized empire. Its consolidation of this region and of western Hellenism was concurrent with the ideological consolidation of Hellenism into Christianity. Christianity was an evolution of religious thought whose call for uniformity was indispensable to both an emperor and to a supreme spiritual leader alike. Christianity emerged during the peak of the Roman Empire in time to becoming a competing force for control of the empire.

The spread of Christianity corresponded to the spread of Jews around the commercial centers of the Mediterranean basin.

Judah survived as an autonomous province or a kingdom until the Mediterranean basin was conquered by Rome. The suzerainty of Rome being further away than Syria or Egypt benefitted their situation in Judah and the Near East. The destruction of the Temple heralded in a new era for Judaism, and removed the primary way by which they could be dominated by foreigners.

This remoteness of Rome allowed for Christianity to take hold in the Hellenistic East, and for Judaism to continue to exist. Christianity allowed Jews to disperse throughout the Roman Empire, and to maintain themselves in the Near East. This was made possible by the confraternity of the two religions.

Aristobulus of Alexandria was a prominent Hellenistic Jewish philosopher. He lived probably in mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C. His successor was Philo of Alexandria (d. 50 A.D.). Philo's concept of the Logos became used for concepts of the divinity of Christ, or Christology. However, he existed just prior to the development of Christian theology.

The end of the Ptolemaic dynasty and the beginning of Roman rule stabilized Alexandria. This lessened the need for the Edomite caravan route. Alexandria and Antioch represented the wealthiest cities in the empire. These were where the early Christians were most active. Christianity was born out of the wealthiest section of Roman Jews in these places.

Augustus (27 B.C.-14 A.D.) continued the policy of Caesar towards the Jews. The Jews didn't pay a formal tax until the Fiscus Judaicus in 70 A.D. The financial crisis of 37-41 may have ended the positive relationship of the Jews with the empire. Early unrest was shown by the Alexandrian Riots against Jews in 38.

Philo was selected by Alexandrian Jews to represent them on embassy to Rome in 40 A.D. The purpose of the embassy was to discuss the recent violence surrounding the Jews in Alexandria.

The first Jewish war (66-70) was started over the issue of taxation. It occurred after the Roman Empire had more or less reached its territorial extent, from Britannia to Armenia. It also began after the Roman-Parthian peace in 63 A.D. Judea was the richest province of the empire, and it was obvious that the Romans were going to try and increase their control over its economy.

The revolt hamstrung the empire for several years, but the Jews were eventually defeated. The Second Temple was destroyed.

The loss of the Temple accelerated the transformation of Second Temple Judaism into Rabbinical Judaism. Outside of the Levant, the damage to Judaism's reputation after the war prompted the development of Christianity. Christianity was centered in eastern regions of the empire, especially the economic centers of Alexandria and Antioch, as well as in the Levant. It also had an early start in Greece, and according to the tradition of the "Seven Churches of the East", in western Anatolia. It started in the major commercial centers for Silk Road commerce around the Mediterranean.

After the destruction of the temple, tradition states that the Sanhedrin of the Pharisees moved to Jamnia. The following period in Rabbinical Judaism is called the "Tannaim", when the oral law was codified into the Mishnah. It's possible that the Bible was canonized by the Sanhedrin at Jamnia before 100 A.D. Judaism continued to develop in the Levant in the first two centuries of the common era, and Christianity caught up with it in the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.

There were eastern analogues to Christian monotheism, with the Silk Road serving as the medium of exchange. Mahayana Buddhism was created around 130 A.D. by merging the teachings of Buddha with Hinduism, but also with elements of religions from the Silk Road via the Kushan Empire; Christianity, Zoroastrianism, and Greek Paganism. In China, Taoism spread in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D. Taoism has been described as "anarcho-capitolist" philosophy.

The Roman empire was revived by the Flavian Dynasty (69-96). The revenues from newly conquered Judah were one of the reasons for its prosperity. The Colosseum was built with wealth acquired from Judah.

“Second Jewish War” The Jews revolted in 115. The Kitos War lasted from 115-117. They did this while Trajan and most of the Roman military was fighting the Parthians in Mesopotamia.

The Bar Kokhba revolt was the third and final Jewish Revolt. It lasted from 130-132. One of the reasons for it was that the Romans were planning to rebuild Judah into their own city. It was a large scale revolt, and it consumed the entire resources of the Roman military. Several entire legions were destroyed. The war resulted in a ban on Judaism. However, the ban was lifted after the emperor Hadrian died in 138.

The Roman Exile wasn't a historical event. It sought to explain how Jews became distributed throughout the Roman Empire.

The Majestic Period of Rome. The Five good emperors 96-180. This was the “honey moon” period of the Silk Road; golden age of the Han dynasty, the high point of the Kushan Empire.

The murder of Pertinax 180 A.D.; the end of the Majestic period of Rome. The Praetorian Guard seized control.

The Edict of Carcalla in 212 granted Roman Citizenship to all freedmen in the empire, including Jews.

The Sanhedrin authorities moved to Babylonia by 220 A.D. This was just before the Sasanian revolution in Mesopotamia, and also within a decade of the Roman Crisis of the Third Century. Jewish authority resided in Babylonia for the next 700 years. Babylonian quickly became the largest Jewish community.

The Crisis of the Third Century (235). An economic crisis in the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire fractured into several prefectures for much of the Third Century. Christianity spread and became a major religion during this period. This growth trend climaxed when Constantine I made it the official religion a hundred years later. His edict didn't make Christianity universal, but it was now dominant, and paganism became increasingly persecuted.

Christianity was a way for Judaism to continue to exist in the Roman Empire. It established itself in time to become a political element as the Roman Empire fell apart. The rise of Roman Christianity occurred in a direct relationship to the decline of the empire. Constantine chose Christianity as the state religion because it was already predominant. Its establishment is attributed to Constantine's reign, but in actuality, Constantine persecuted Nicene Christians when he was able to.

The popularization of Christianity around 300 allowed for Jews to widely settle around the Roman Empire from this point onward.

Jews established a permanent presence in Crimea after 300 A.D.

The Goths were originally located at the extremity of the Baltic route that connected Scandinavia with the Black Sea. This ancient trade route is known as the Amber Route.

The Goths had settled in Gothiscandza, on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea, several generations prior to their emigration to the steppe. From about 150 A.D. they expanded as the Wielbark culture. This

expansion culminated in the empire of Ermeneric that Attila conquered, and was the primary cause of strain on Europe from 150-350.

The golden age of the Roman and Han empires, which represented the political unification for each of these disparate regions, the Mediterranean basin and China, coincided with Babylonian trade, or the Silk Road, having reached these extremities of Eurasia. The primary goal of Babylon up to this point was its establishment in the Mediterranean.

Having done this by the spread Judeo Christianity in the Mediterranean, the subsequent goal was to extend political influence into Central Asia. This was done later by Islam.

The reasons for being involved in Central Asia during the early Medieval period was as a territorial imperative to the Near East, and to extend Abrahamic influence further along the Asian maritime periphery to India and Southeast Asia.

The movement of the Jewish community from Palestine to Babylonia was an indicator of the shift away from the periphery after the golden period of the Silk Road. This coincided with the Sassanian revolution, which made a Persian dynasty in control of Mesopotamia for the first time in 600 years.

The Achaemenids and the Sassanids were more western oriented than their Parthian counterparts. This made them better disposed towards Jews and native people in Mesopotamia. The rise of both Persian dynasties were successful interventions of Semitic Mesopotamian civilization into the affairs of the Medes.

The Sasanid renaissance in Mesopotamia continued as the early Islamic renaissance.

The Sassanids created a strong Mesopotamian Empire at a time when the Romans and Chinese were overcome by barbarians. This retracted the wealth of the Silk Road back into its core, in Mesopotamia or Babylonia. The Persians defeated the Roman Empire decisively in 363. This defeat forced the shift of Roman the capitol to the east. This move allowed the Roman Empire to survive, but made it lose its grip on the Mediterranean and Gaul, which benefitted Judeo Christianity.

While the Black Sea or the Pontic steppe was a lucrative region on its own, the move of the Roman capitol east proved to be fortuitous or forward thinking after the Gokturks established the northern silk route during the 6<sup>th</sup> century. An inner Asian economic sphere developed with Constantinople situated at its terminus in the Mediterranean. Constantinople became the primary competitor of Roman Christianity and Islam in the Near East and the Mediterranean.

The deterioration of Rome and China from the 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> centuries indicates that an economic retraction from these peripheral regions occurred. Rome fractured into several "prefectures" led by barbarian generals. Rome was only united for brief periods after 235. This makes its end point similar to the Han Empire. The Han Empire fell in 220 and Northern China was ruled by Barbarians after 304. The Kushan Empire between them also declined in a similar timeframe. The Han Empire fell before the Romans because of its proximity to Mongolia.

Concurrently with Rome and China, South India entered a dark age from about 300-600 called the Kalabhra interregnum. This was the corresponding economic retraction in South India.

Romans dominated Mesopotamia around 100 A.D., and the Parthians entered a long period of decline. Trajan had the heir apparent of the Parthian throne assassinated in 114. The general Lusius Quietus led an invasion of Parthia. He captured Nisibis, and the following year, while the Parthian empire was engaged in a civil war, Trajan invaded Mesopotamia. Trajan spent the winter of 115-16 at Antioch. Next he marched down the Euphrates, captured the capitol of Ctsephion and went as far as Cheracene, on the Persian Gulf. He occupied Susa in 116. Sanatruces II prepared to march west and meet him, but was murdered by his brother Parthamastapes. Rome made Parthamastapes king.

On his return trip, Babylonians revolted against the Roman garrisons. Trajan was forced to retreat North in 117. He planned to return and conquer Parthia, but he died suddenly that same year.

Hadrian reaffirmed the Roman border at the Euphrates.

Rabbi Samuel was an acquaintance of Shapur I, (r. 240-272). His reign was beneficial for the Jews. Shapur II (r. 309-379), persecuted Christians, but was mostly positive towards the Jews.

The Sassanian Revolution created a Persian state that was much more western and ecumenical than the Parthian emperors. Zoroastrianism didn't retain its grip over the Sassanid kings, who were mostly religiously tolerant. This was important because Judaism had shifted east to Babylon in 220, and also Christian populations were emerging in Northern Mesopotamia.

In addition to patronizing Abrahamic faiths, early Sassanid policy was focused in the west, in Mesopotamia. Early Sassanid kings focused bringing urban centers, almost all of which were in Mesopotamia, directly under their control. These became "royal cities", and were controlled through a royally appointed governorship.

This Sassanid policy facilitated vigorous urban development. This development was also almost entirely in the west, in Mesopotamia. The second king, Shapur, increased these royal cities from two to fifteen. The early Sassanian period was an important period for the growth of Mesopotamian society. (Pourshariati, p. 38). This "Babylonian Renaissance" continued into the Islamic era.

The edict of Milan made Christianity the dominant Abrahamic faith in the west instead of Judaism. The result was the popularization of Christianity and a corresponding reduction of Judaism in the Roman Empire.

Carrying out the edict of Milan, Constantine abolished the Sanhedrin, the primary organization of rabbinical Judaism. This helped shift Judaism to Babylonia. In Babylon itself, there had been a struggle occurring between the 3<sup>rd</sup> century influx of rabbinical Judaism and the Exilarch. The Exilarch sought to tax rabbis and appoint the leaders of the yeshivas. The taxation of rabbis was considered unethical and bitterly opposed.

The head of the academy of Pumbedita maintained financial independence in order to resist the oversight of the Exilarch. In the time of Rava (d. 352), the academy was moved to Mahoza and made subordinated to the Exilarch. For a time, all Babylonian academies appear to have been controlled by the Exilarch. (Neusner, 1969 p. 99).

Yadzegard I married Shushandukht, a daughter of the Jewish Exilarch. He pursued religious tolerance at the expense of the Zoroastrians.

Yadzegard and Shushandukht had three sons; Shapur IV, Bahram V, and Narse. Shapur IV was installed as king of Armenia in 415.

Yadzegard had a troubled relationship with Bahram V, so he sent him to the Lakhmids at a young age. The Lakhmid king educated Bahram V with officials that he obtained from the Sasanian court.

The Zoroastrians and nobles worked to prevent a son of Yadzegard from succeeding him. After the death of Yadzegard, Shapur IV went to Ctsephion to be crowned king. The nobles elected Khosrau, son of Bahram IV, in opposition to him. Khosrau killed Shapur IV and temporarily became king.

Khosrau's position was challenged by Yadzegard's other son, Bahram V. Bahram marched on Ctsephion with a Lakhmid army and succeeded against Khosrau. His reign was relatively peaceful, but marks the end of the first golden era, and the beginning of a period of decline for Persia. The Zoroastrians and Parthian nobility were able to gain control over the Sasanid Kings.

Bahram V was succeeded by Yadzegard II. He attempted to convert Christians to Zoroastrianism and to establish it as the sole religion in the kingdom. These efforts were muted though, by the increasing warfare that he found himself in with the Romans in the west, and the Huns in the east.

The Hunnic invasions of Europe, Bactria, and China were caused by the expansion of the Avars in Mongolia.

The ascendancy Nicene Christianity and the Roman diocese occurred during periods when the emperor was preoccupied with invasions or civil wars. When these threats were overcome, the emperor was able to turn his attention to religious issues and curtail the rights of the Nicene Christian Church. The rise of Roman Christianity was purposely aligned to the timeline of the Hunnic expansion from Central Asia because the Hunnic expansion was the predominant trend in warfare during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Initially, the civil wars between Constantine's sons allowed Nicene Christianity to operate without the interference of a strong emperor. However, the empire was united under Constantius II, and Arianism came to the fore.

The early conflict between Nicene and Arian Christianity was centered around the Nicene Bishop of Alexandria, Athanasius. Athanasius succeeded Alexander to the See of Alexandria in 327. He came into conflict with Meletius of Nicopolis. The terms of Nicaea said that Meletius could only exercise authority in Lycopolis. In 335, Eusebius of Caesarea presided over a council in Tyre that deposed Athanasius.

Athanasius had the issue brought before Constantine. Eusebius attended, and succeeded in having Athanasius deposed. Athanasius was exiled to Gaul.

Eusebius became very close to Constantine. Eusebius later baptized Constantine on his deathbed and wrote his biography. Eusebius was also close to his successor, Constantius II.

In 336, the bishops of the east convened in Constantinople to readmit Arius. While he was walking through the streets of Constantinople, the day before he was to be readmitted, he collapsed and died. The Romans thought that it was divine intervention, but his friends thought that he was poisoned.

Constantine II was in conflict with Constans in the western part of the empire. Constans prevailed (340) and was a Catholic.

Eusebius of Nicomedia became Bishop of Constantinople in 338. A synod in 341 renewed the deposition of Athanasius, and sent delegates to Constans, the Western Emperor, and Pope Julius to defend their position.

Athanasius was reinstated when Constantine I died in 337. Shortly thereafter, Constantius II renewed his deposition. In 338, Athanasius travelled to Rome where he had the protection of the Western Emperor, Constans. Gregory of Cappadocia, an Arian, was installed at Alexandria.

A council was convened by Pope Julius in Rome to support Athanasius. Athanasius travelled extensively, and eventually visited Hosius of Cordoba. Hosius presided over the council of Sardica (343), which reversed the charges against Athanasius and other bishops at the Synod of Tyre. The Arian bishops, who were in the minority, speedily withdrew to Thrace where they held their own council which reaffirmed Tyre.

Gregory of Cappadocia, the Arian bishop, was killed in 345. Constantius II was forced to reconsider his position. The war with Shapur II, coupled with threatening letters from Constans, made him capitulate to the Roman cause. Athanasius was reinstated as bishop. Athanasius maintained a relatively stable position for 10 years.

350 Shapur II had to make a hasty treaty with Romans in order to face invasions in the East. Constantius II was able to turn west and defeated Constans in 350. Constans was killed by Magnentius in 350, who became the western emperor. Constantius defeated Magnentius at Mursa in 353.

What followed was the high point of Arianism. Hosius of Cordoba was pressured by the Arians and Constantius. He wrote his famous letter in 353 proclaiming the freedom of the church from imperial affairs. In response, he was exiled to Sirmium in 355. Pope Liberius was exiled in 357 and forced into signing a formula which omitted the Homoiouios. Athanasius was exiled in 356.

Cyril of Jerusalem

What followed is generally referred to as Arianism or Semi-Arianism. Pope Liberius, Dionysius of Milan, and Eusebius of Vercelli were sent into exile. Constantius appointed Felix II, who became an

antipope (355-65). He appointed an Arian Bishop to Milan. Auxentius was bishop of Milan from 355 to 374. The council of Sirmium (357) was a Western compromise with Arianism. The council of Arminium in 359 was heavily in favor of the Arians.

Immediately after the death of the eastern emperor Constantius, Pope Liberius was reinstated. Rome continued to be in a polarized state. Liberius admitted some of the more moderate Arians into his clergy.

Liberius died in 366. Rome broke into factional violence. The upper class supporters of Felix II now backed Damasus. The deacons and laity who had supported Liberius backed Ursinus. Both were elected simultaneously. Riots ensued which required the intervention of Valentinian I. He chose Damasus. Damasus was the first "society pope". He belonged to a group of Iberian Christians that were closely related to the future emperor Theodosius (Cameron, 1985).

Constantius died while returning to face the usurper Julian. On his deathbed, he was baptized and proclaimed Julian as his rightful heir. Julian created a revival in paganism, which included the persecution of Christians.

Julian died in battle with the Persians near Samaria. His successor, Jovian, was a general who was proclaimed emperor on the battlefield. Jovian was unable to retreat and was completely surrounded by the Persians. He had to negotiate on unfavorable terms in order to avoid being annihilated. The Romans ceded all their possessions in Mesopotamia, retaining only Asia Minor. They also ceded strategic fortresses on the border with Mesopotamia. The Sasanians gained a significant advantage for future confrontations. The defeat was a major factor in the fall of the Roman Empire.

Jovian was very unpopular due to these circumstances. He supported Nicene Christianity. He reversed the edicts of Julian, and restored Christianity as the state religion. Jovian reinstated Athanasius in Alexandria. He ordered the execution of Pagans. He did all of these things while he was stationed in Antioch. He was poisoned on his return to Constantinople, having never resided at the capitol. The army marched to Nicaea, where Valentinian was proclaimed emperor.

Jovian induced Acacius, along with Meletius of Antioch and 25 bishops, to accept the Nicene Creed, amending it to mean that the sameness of the father and son (homoousios) meant merely a likeness (homoios kat ousian). In 365, the Macedonians assembled at Lampsacus under Eleusius and condemned the Arian councils of Arminum and Antioch, reiterating the doctrine of likeness. This was undone by the Eastern Emperor, Valens, who was an Arian. He forced Eleusius to sign the Arian creed at Nicomedia in 366.

Valentinian (364-375) was the last great Roman emperor. He successfully defended the borders against Germans and Sarmatians. He was the last emperor to campaign across the Rhine. He was religiously tolerant because he was preoccupied with defending the empire. He appointed his brother Valens as Eastern Emperor. Valens was an Arian.



Valens ordered Athanasius to be exiled. This time, Athanasius withdrew to the countryside and waited for a few months. Valens appointed an Arian, Lucius, in his place. Lucius carried out a persecution of Nicaeans.

Auxentius, the Arian Bishop of Milan, died in 374. Ancient Milan, or Mediolanum was the capitol of the Western Empire, so Auxentius was the primary force of Arianism in the West. His succession was contested by Arian and Nicene Christians.

Aurelius Ambrose was the Roman governor of the province centered on Milan. He was probably the son of Aurelius Ambrosius, the Praetorian Prefect of Gaul. He was known to be a Nicene Christian. As governor, he was responsible for maintaining order during the tumultuous election. According to his hagiography, he was elected by popular proclamation. He was bishop of Milan from 374-397. Ambrose is remembered as one of the original four doctors of the church. Under Ambrose, and then Theodosius, ancient Milan (Mediolanum) reached the height of its power. It fell to the Goths in the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

Valentinian died in battle with the Quadi in 375. He had appointed his son Gratian as Augustus, and therefore successor. Valens did not accept him, but rather backed Gratian's four year old brother, who became Valentinian II. Gratian represented Ambrose and Nicene Christianity, while Valentinian II and his mother, the empress regent Justina, represented the Arian party. There was another notable division between them; Valentinian II was supported by the Frank Merobaudes, while Gratian had *his comites Alani*.

The Gothic uprising in 376 was the beginning of the Gothic War, from 376-382. The Goths defeated the Romans at Adrianople in 378. Valens died at Adrianople. He was succeeded by Gratian.

In 385 or 386, the empress Justina had enough influence that she demanded for Ambrose to give them two churches in the vicinity of Milan. Ambrose refused, and the threat of a revolt kept it from happening. In 386, Justina and Auxentius the younger demanded that Valentinian be given a church by Ambrose. Ambrose barricaded himself inside the church with the congregation, and Justina was forced to rescind the order.

Maximus was a theologian and an acquaintance of both Athanasius and Ambrose. He was banished from Alexandria in 374 by the Arian bishop, Lucius. He was released in 378 and traveled to Milan, where he was received by Ambrose. From there, he traveled to Constantinople in 381 to compete for that see.

Maximus initially arrived in the confidence and good faith of the bishop of Constantinople, Gregory. Because of Gregory's lack of support, Maximus was able to be ordained as Patriarch in the middle of the night. When the magistrates and populace heard of the plan, however, they drove him out of the town. The arrival of Theodosius in 380 reinforced the position of Gregory. Theodosius also backed Meletius of Antioch, who was not supported by Rome or Ambrose.

At the first Council of Constantinople in 381, Theodosius chose a new bishop from a list provided by the attendants. No western bishops were present at the council. The Bishop of Antioch put Nectarius at the bottom, and he was chosen by Theodosius. He was a dark horse candidate, a commoner of little

importance. Neither him nor Gregory had been supported by Damasus and Ambrose, who had attempted to put the more zealous Maximus at the head of Constantinople.

The First Council of Constantinople was most important for its canon which elevated Constantinople above all the other sees *except* Rome. The assertion of Constantinople challenged the position of Alexandria as the dominant see in the east. The two powers fought bitterly until the mid 5<sup>th</sup> century. The Council of Chalcedon (451) created major schisms in both Alexandria and Antioch by denouncing Monophysites, and thereby splitting both of their religious populations. This led to the decline of these two sees, and ultimately, to the prolonged standoff between Rome and Constantinople during the medieval era.

The new concept that included Constantinople as a diocese was called the Pentarchy. It stood for the five sees; Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem. Jerusalem only had a ritualistic significance. The Pentarchy replaced the earlier concept of the three Petrene Sees. These were Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria. The Pentarchy concept remained in place throughout the Middle Ages.

The western frontier of the Abrahamic establishment in the 5th century was in Gaul. Nicene Christianity had secured this strategic region out of the crumbling Roman Empire, and it prevailed here during the earliest period of medieval history. The Merovingians were an important bridge for Judaism and Roman Christianity between the Roman and Islamic periods. This is why the Merovingian's decline coincides with the rise of Islam.

The Salian Franks were the primary champions of Nicene Christianity in the late 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries. They fought Arian kingdoms in Western and Central Europe. They spread Nicene Christianity to England via Kent.

Western Europe was still an obscure place during this period. However, it was an important frontier and a location for Jews and Christians at a time when they were persecuted elsewhere. Gaul was isolated while still being connected to the Mediterranean and the Silk Road.

Jews were highly influential in the Merovingian court. They were given a privileged status in the kingdom because they were a primary revenue source (Bachrach,). This is an example of Jews following the frontier of Roman Christianity. France was the center of Rhadanite Jewish traders, and their establishment there could date to the 6<sup>th</sup> century.

The establishment of the Merovingians after the Hunnic invasion follows the pattern of Nicene Christianity exploiting the Huns. It also fits the broader pattern of Babylonian religions permanently shifting westward during economic lowpoints and the climax of nomadic invasions.

One of the most lasting contributions of the Merovingians was the conquest of Bavaria. It ended Bavaria's progress towards the domination of Northern Italy. This Rhine-Italian political situation would be realized 350 years with the creation of the Holy Roman Empire.

The Merovingians were adept warriors, but poor rulers. The church took advantage of this to amass great properties and political influence in Francia. This began especially after the Merovingian power

started to decline. The church was central in the Merovingian policy of granting immunities to these different lords, which led to the unraveling of their kingdom. As Merovingian authority diminished, the church immediately stepped into its vacuum and provided a form of feudal governance in their kingdoms. (Bark, 16)

While Roman Christianity and Judaism flourished in Gaul, widespread difficulties for Judaism and Nicene Christianity in the late 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries were apparent. This was because of a resurgence of ancient imperialism in the mid to late 6<sup>th</sup> century.

Symmachus was Pope from 498-514. There was a rival pro-Byzantine Pope elected also from 498-506. This divided allegiances in the city.

Pope Silverius was exiled and starved by Belisarius in 538. His successor, Vigilius, was the first "Byzantine Pope". The Byzantine papacy lasted from 537 until the conquests of Pepin the Short. Byzantines presided over the election of Roman Popes during this period, but were mostly unable to exercise real authority in Rome.

The Exilarch and Jewish community were constantly persecuted by the Sasanians during the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Exilarch, Huna V, was executed by Peroz in 470. The position was vacant for a period after him due to persecutions. There may have been an Exilarch, Huna VI, who died of the plague, or he may be the same person as Huna V. The next definite Exilarch, Mar Zutra II, was executed in either 502 or 520 by Kavadh I. His successor, Mar Ahunai, didn't appear in public for 30 years. Two Exilarchs later, Haninai was executed by Khosrau II, supposedly for supporting Bahram VI. His son, Bostanai, married a Persian princess and subsequently flourished as the first Exilarch under Arab rule.

During the height of persecutions, the exilarch, Mar Zutra II, led Mahozah in a rebellion against Kavadh I. Mahozah was west of Ctsephion and had a large Jewish section. Mahozah remained independent for 7 years before the revolt was put down, and Mar Zutra II was crucified.

The Council of Chalcedon was a brief success for Nicene Christianity, but was challenged soon after by Constantinople.

The re-conquest of Italy was long and expensive. When it was complete, Justinian was able to focus his attention on the East and Persia again. In 557, Lazica was restored to the Byzantines as a protectorate.

In 552, the Gokturks overthrew the Avar Khaganate in Mongolia. As a result, the Avars reached the Pontic steppe and established contact with the Byzantine Empire in 557, and settled in the Danube basin in 562.

In 568, the Avars concluded an alliance with the Lombards to invade Pannonia. It was occupied by the Gepids. Together, they easily achieved this. By their agreement, the Avars were to settle in Pannonia, and assist the Lombards in their invasion of Italy.

The Lombards invaded Northern Italy in 568. They were accompanied by Saxons, Heruls, Gepids, Bulgars, Thuringians and Ostrogoths. Italy had been ravaged by the Gothic Wars. The Byzantines had

repelled an invasion by the Franks following the reconquest, but the Lombard invasion was almost unopposed.

The Lombard invasion was the western extremity of nomadic disruptions during the migrational phase caused by the overthrow of the Avar Khaganate in Mongolia.

Italy became divided into Byzantine and Lombard territories. The Lombards had two kingdoms separated by the Exarchate of Ravenna, Longobardia Major and Longobardia Minor. The Lombards primarily settled in Northern Italy, but gradually expanded over southern Italy.

The Lombard conquests were mostly completed by 600 A.D. Longobardia Major comprised all of northern Italy, although the coast of Milan held out for a long time. The Byzantines retained the southern extremity of Peninsula, Sicily, and a strip of land from Ravenna to Rome.

In addition to giving the perception of controlling Rome, the strip of land was important for separating the two Lombard kingdoms. Despite the greatest effort on the part of Longobardia major, these two regions remained separate, and were the key to the survival of Rome and Ravenna.

By 580, the Avars conquered the Slavs in Pannonia. The Avars then expanded into parts of Thrace. The Avar tyranny caused waves of Slavic migrants to enter the Byzantine possessions in the Balkans from about 580-620.

Avars, Lombards, and Slavs shattered Constantinople's ambitions in the west. This laid the foundations for the Medieval and modern Roman Catholic Church. The Lombards were preferable to either a Merovingian or a Byzantine occupation of Italy.

While the Byzantines experienced one setback after another, the Persian Empire underwent a renewed period of expansion. This was due to the contraction of Byzantine influence, but also to reforms of the Sasanid military and bureaucracy. This period of expansion climaxed with the conquest of the Near East and Egypt. The Sasanian expansion was brief, but had profound effects, especially in regards to the subsequent rise of Islam.

Khosrow I modernized the fiscal administration of Persia. This change allowed him to field royal armies instead of relying on the Parthian feudal dynasts that the Sasanids had perennially struggled with for control.

In the 580's, Khosrau I finally conquered Caucasian Iberia- the eastern half of the Transcaucuses.

After Heraclius became emperor (610), Khosrau II invaded Syria. In 613-14 the Persians occupied Damsacus and Jerusalem, and 616, Egypt. They were now in control of the entire Middle East. The peak of the Persian Empire was the siege of Constantinople in 627.

Avars and Persians cooperated in the siege, but Constantinople withstood it. The Persians and Avars were separated by the Bosphorus. The Persians did not have the navy to enact a blockade. The choice of the Romans in 300 to move their capitol was proven by this event.

The western Turkic Khaganate had split off during the Gokturk civil war. It managed to extend its influence over most of the Silk Road. In 568, the Byzantine Empire established an economic partnership with the Gokturks to receive Silk Road commerce. In 627, they concluded an alliance with the Turks against Persia.

The Byzantine-Turkic offensive was ultimately beneficial for the Turks. It was in this period, directly following the siege of Constantinople, that the ground was laid for the Khazar Khaganate to emerge in the Transcaucasian region from the ashes of the Western Khaganate.

The Turks entered at the Caspian Gates. They joined the Byzantines in Iberia, which was a Persian Vassal. The siege of Tbilisi, the captiol of Iberia, lasted until the end of the year. The Turks had retreated to the steppe, and in December of 627, the Romans turned south into Persia. They made it almost to Ctsephion, the capitol, and ravaged its surroundings. The defeat was enough to destabilize Persia and create a civil war. The remainder of Khosrau II's reign saw an unraveling of the Empire.

629 the two powers concluded a peace agreement. The borders were restored to the status of. Because of the peace treaty and the economic state of both empires, there were almost no troops left to guard the Near East. This was the condition of the Middle East on the eve of the Arab Expansion.

The Persians nearly conquered Arabia in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. In this way, the Sasanids facilitated the subsequent expansion of Arabs. The unification of Arabia was first done by the Lakhmids, whose kingdom was located in Northeast Arabia, and was intermittently a client of the Sasanian Empire.

Imru Al-Qais, king of the Lakhmids, was the first called to be called the "king of all Arabs". It says he campaigned successfully across Arabia, all the way down to Najran. Before he could build on his accomplishments, in 325, Shapur II led an army of 60,000 men into the desert to pursue the Lakhmids. Imru Al-Qais appealed to Constantius II, who promised him help. However, this help never materialized, and he was utterly defeated. He fled to Syria and waited for Byzantine help. It never came, and he died in Syria with his dream of a united Arabia.

The Lakhmids became vassals of the Sasanian Empire. The Byzantine Empire supported the Lakhmid's rivals, the Ghassanids. This was the state of North-Central Arabia for the next 300 years [expand].

The Persians conquered all of Arabia by 600 A.D. Ma'd-Karib, the half brother of the Himyarite king, requested help from the Romans against Axumite occupation. They denied his request. In 570, he requested help from Persia. Persia sent a small fleet to Yemen and annexed the kingdom. Himyar later proclaimed independence from the Persians. Persia sent another fleet in 598 and conquered southern Arabia. This situation lasted about 25 years.

There was a sizable Jewish population in ancient Aksum. It was large enough to have significantly influenced the native religions.

Aksum became a regional force in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. This points to an alliance with the "silk road orthodoxy": Rome and the Kushans. Previously, the most important kingdom in Ethiopia was Meroe, a

major iron trader on the Southern Nile. Beginning in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, Aksum began to encroach on it, until it conquered it in the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

King Ezana of Askum converted to Christianity in either 325 or 328. King Ezana brought his childhood teacher, Frumentius, from Syria to head the Ethiopian Church. Frumentius went to Alexandria, and was appointed Bishop of Ethiopia by the Nicene bishop Athanasius. Subsequently, Alexandria appointed all bishops of Ethiopia. Constantius II, the emperor, demanded that Frumentius be sent to Alexandria and checked for “doctrinal errors”. He probably refused this request (Munro-Hay, *Aksum*, pp. 78ff). [Arian bishop in Alexandria at this time?]

The Byzantines were seeking to control Arabian trade. This would have made them control all trade routes into the Mediterranean. They wanted to establish a Christian protectorate in the Peninsula. The Himyarites conversion Judaism around 380 was probably a reaction to this. The first invasion of Himyar by Aksum occurred in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. It was triggered by the murder of Byzantine merchants. Aksum invaded Himyar and established a diocese. By 500 Aksum exercised control over most of the Peninsula. Himyar ceased to be Jewish, but not before a Jew named Dhu Nuwas usurped the crown and committed ruthless massacres of Christians. He lost support of most of the Jewish population, however, probably for these massacres.

Around 520, Kaleb of Aksum sent an army into Himyar that killed Dhu Nuwas. A Christian king was placed on the throne, and it became officially a tributary of Aksum. Himyar, at this point, exercised control over most of the Peninsula. A Himyarite general named Abreha rebelled against Aksum’s vassal king. Troops sent by Aksum killed their own general and defected to Abreha. More troops were sent and were defeated by Abreha. Abreha maintained his independence and patronized Christianity. The area was conquered by the Sasanians before the end of his reign. Aksum, therefore, rose and fell with the Roman Empire.

Due to all of these conflicts lasting about from 400-620, traditional Indo-Arabian trade routes were disrupted. In Syria, the disruption was due to the Byzantine-Sassanid Wars. In Egypt, it was mostly due to the Axumite expansion, with Axum being an ally of the Byzantines. During this time, Arabs rose to the forefront of global trade by rerouting Indo Arabian commerce through Yemen, to Palestine. This created an unprecedented prosperity in Arabia in the century leading up to the Arab conquest, in stark contrast to the condition of other Western powers.

In the 5<sup>th</sup> century, the Quaryish tribe took control of Mecca. Mohammed belonged to the Banu Hashim clan of the Quaryish tribe. The Banu Hashim clan was started by Hashim ibn ‘Abd Manaf al Mughira (464-497), great grandfather of Mohammed. He married Salma bint Amr of the Banu Najjar, a Jewish clan from Medina. Hashim established a caravan network from Aden to Palestine. He received duty-free trade in the Byzantine Empire.

The Arab exodus was reminiscent of the Kish, Amorites, and Aramaeans who probably originated from Arabia, and migrated to Syria at 1000 year intervals. Damascus was previously the dominant Aramaean city; but for the Amorites it was Aleppo. From Syria, ancient Semites conquered Mesopotamia each time, which was the greatest civilization of their time.

The first target of the Arabs was the Sasanid Empire. Establishing themselves in Mesopotamia first put them in a favorable position to invade the Byzantine Empire. The Arab conquest of Syria lasted from 634-41, and of Egypt from 639-42. The Byzantines led a failed attempt to retake Alexandria in 645.

The Rashidun Caliphate lasted from 634-661. It was the first Islamic state and was administered by from Mecca. However, power soon shifted from Arabia to Syria. The governor of Syria, Mu'awiya, gradually consolidated his hold of the Near East; Syria, the Levant, Egypt, and even Northern Mesopotamia. He founded the Umayyad Caliphate and the Umayyad dynasty.

Ali, the Caliph in Mecca, was threatened by Mu'awiya's dominance in Syria. The Battle of Siffin in 657 was a stalemate, but Ali was unable to challenge Mu'awiya, and this hurt his reputation. Much of Ali's support left him, and he declined in importance.

In 658, Mu'awiya expelled Ali's governor of Egypt, and took this important region for himself. Jerusalem recognized him in 660, making him the Caliph of the entire Near East. Ali planned to invade again in 661, but his assassination prevented it. Mu'awiya entered Kufa and gained the allegiance of Muslims in Iraq. This ended the first Fitna and began the period of the Umayyad Caliphate.

The Umayyad Caliphate concluded the period when the Middle East was contested between the Romans and Persians. Islam inherited the sum of these empires, which represented the two major political spheres of the ancient world, the Mediterranean and the Middle East, and then expanded further outward to become truly ecumenical.

Roman Christianity and Sunni Islam were confraternal religions working for the same cause during the early Islamic period, or the Islamic Golden Age. Islamic authority replaced Greek and Roman Christian authority in the Near East. Roman Christianity became limited to west-central Europe, and the Greek Church to the Balkans.

The Umayyad Caliphate consolidated its political control of the new Islamic world for the remainder of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. On the accession of Al Walid I in 705, Islam was ready to expand outward again. The Arabs invaded Central Asia from 706-712, conquered the Indus Valley in the period from 711-714, and Hispania from 711-721.

The Umayyads conquered from Spain to China. They challenged Europe, Central Asia, Africa, and India, near simultaneously, and furthered the development of Sunni Islam and its fraternal religions, Roman Christianity and Rabbinical Judaism. Islam prompted the consolidation of Europe by Charlemagne, and commenced a period of long term involvement in Central Asia and India that would lead to the Islamic conquest of India.

Muslims developed far reaching trade by developing Trans Saharan trade, and by sailing directly from the Persian Gulf to China. Together with the Muslims conquest of Iberia, and the Carolingian renaissance, these developments amounted to an immense outward expansion of Middle Eastern trade routes. Economic expansion into these peripheral regions allowed Islam to pursue a long term

aggressive strategy towards the traditional interior of the Silk Road, in Central Asia and Northern India, that it couldn't have in prior eras.

Lombard presence was preferable to Constantinople, or even the Merovingians. The Popes were preoccupied for the next 200 years with obtaining protection from the Lombards. It was a precarious situation, but it was the one which the Popes had welcomed in order to prevent reintegration with the east. In 590, the sign of St Peter, an upside down cross, was erected in the Holy See to symbolize its independence. Technically, this created the Papal States.

There were no kings of Lombardia from 574-586. Threatened by the invasion of the Franks, the Dukes elected Authari, the son of the previous king. The Lombards allied with the Bavarians against the Franks. Theudelinda, the daughter of Garibald I of Bavaria, married Autari in 589.

Theudelinda established Catholicism in northern Lombardia. Her brother, Gundoald, also came to Italy and became Duke of Asti. They were fleeing from the Franks, who had invaded Bavaria in response to her marriage to Authari. Clothar III wanted Theudelinda to marry Childebert II, and Childebert's sister to marry Autari. In 590, the Franks allied with Byzantium in a failed attack on Lombardia.

Arioald (626-36) married Theudelinda's daughter. He was an Arian, and overthrew Theudelinda, who had ruled since her husband had died in 616. There were Arian kings from 626-652; showing successful intervention by Constantinople. Constantinople's strategy was to ally with the conservative faction of Lombards who opposed cooperation and integration into Latium. This was the characteristic of the "Arian" party. They could not reconquer Italy, but they could drive a wedge into Rome's plans to convert the Lombards.

In 653, the Lombards elected Aripert I in a victory for the Catholic faction. He was the son of Theudelinda's brother, Gundoald. He persecuted Arianism, and spread Catholicism throughout Northern and Southern Lombardia. After Constantinople lost the Near East and Egypt to the Arabs, the papacy made this turnaround in Italy.

The Merovingian Realm gradually became controlled by an administrative position called the Mayor of the Palace. One of them, Charles Martel, supported by the Pope, overthrew the Merovingians and started the Carolingian Dynasty.

Jews probably supported the revolution. They became even more influential in the Carolingian court than they had been in the Merovingian period. The primary opponent of Jewish influence in the Carolingian period was Agobard of Lyons. Despite his attempts, the Jews continued to wield great influence and receive protection from the Carolingians and the Church.

Charles Martel's son, Pepin the Short (751-768), was the first Carolingian King. Pepin the Short reunited the Frankish realm. After this, he intervened in Italy on the Pope's behalf. The Donation of Pepin bequeathed the regions around Rome to the Church.



Charlemagne (768-814) was the most notable Carolingian because he created a brief empire encompassing Western and Central Europe. Charlemagne conquered Lombardy and made it into a Carolingian march. His son was made King of Lombardy.

Because of the distance, the Carolingians in Francia were able to exert little authority in Northern Italy besides nominally protecting it. This resulted in the expansion of Roman Church's temporal power in Northern Italy. The church returned the favor by crowning Charlemagne as "King of the Romans".

Charlemagne's Empire was an important step for the spread of Christendom, but the church didn't gain much temporal power from it outside of Northern Italy. Rather, the Church began to make progress after the Carolingian Empire fragmented. This led to a brief period of power for the Church in the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. The peak of the Carolingian papacy was during Pope Nicholas I.

Charlemagne was crowned King of Lombardy in 774 and gave this position to his son, Pepin, in 780. Pepin's son, Bernard, became King of Lombardy in 810. He plotted against the Charlemagne's successor in Francia, Louis the Pious. He was caught by Louis and died in his custody.

In the last decade of Louis' reign, his three sons plotted against him and there were two civil wars. After Louis' death, civil wars between them terminally split the empire into three kingdoms. All of these civil wars were instigated by the church. The main instigator was a bishop named Wala. By breaking up the Carolingian Empire, the Roman church made great strides in establishing itself outside Italy, and also avoided the Carolingian domination Italy. Europe entered into a long term period of turmoil within thirty years that lasted until the mid 10<sup>th</sup> century.

Dominant European Jews probably arrived in the Carolingian Period, or possibly earlier. Ashkenazi rites show little influence from Islam, unlike Jews who were in Islamic territories after 750. Instead, they have a distinctly Roman-Babylonian tradition. It lacks the philosophical character of Jews influenced by Islam, being instead steeped in mystical tradition. The Rhadanite Jews being based in France shows that Western European Jews were preeminent, despite being located at the extremity of the Judeo Christian world.

The revolts during Abd Al-Maliks' reign (685-705) slowed the advance of Islam. As soon as his son Al-Walid became Caliph (705-715), expansion resumed.

The overthrow of the Second Khaganate by Uyghurs in 742 initiated a long period of instability and warfare for the control of Mongolia. This warfare increased in intensity until the conquests of Genghis Khan. The heightened exodus of nomads from Mongolia increasingly applied pressure into Central Asia, Russia, and the Balkans. The overall effect of the ethnic Mongolian exodus, which spanned from 1000-1250, was the suppression of the entire "core" of Asia, spanning from Constantinople to China. The defense of India from the Mongols by Islam was a remarkable and important exception to this trend.

The Karluks allied with the Arabs against their former ruler, China, in the battle of Talas (751).

The Abbasid revolution was led by Iranians and Arabs from Merv, an important Silk Road city in Iran. The result of the Abbasid Revolution was that Iranians assumed control of the bureaucracy of the Caliphate.

The location of Baghdad was chosen so it could rely on the administrative systems of nearby Persian cities (Beckwith, ).

A global recession began in 830. The Tang Empire entered into a final period of decline. A wave of Xenophobia in the empire caused people to murder Uighurs and Sogdians in large numbers. The commercial empire that the Sogdians had built up collapsed in this period.

In Europe, the Carolingian Empire was splintered by civil wars between Louis the Pious' sons. This breakup led to the height of the early Roman Catholic Church during the first millennium, in the mid to late 9<sup>th</sup> century.

The Khazar Empire experienced a civil war and began to decline around this time.

Yehudia ben Nehemia was Gaon of Sura from 757-761. He was especially active in making the Babylonian Talmud the sole authority within Judaism. His main opposition was in Eretz Israel, where Jews used the Jerusalem Talmud. Yehudia Gaon was the author of the Halakhot Pesukot, which became the Halakhot Gedolot, or "great" Halakha.

Natronai Ben Hilai was Gaon of Sura for ten years in the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. He issued more response to the diaspora than any of his predecessors. He was especially active with the Jews of Al Andalus. It was during his time that "teams of mules" were required to carry the correspondence between Babylonia and Catalonia (Bachrach,). Natronai is said to have magically transported himself to Narbonne to instruct the Jews there.

The Halakhot Gedolot appears to have been transmitted directly to the Carolingian and German Jews. From here, it was transmitted to Italy in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, where it was used by the preeminent Italian Talmudist, Isiah di Trani (c. 1200-1250).

There is another version of the Halakha Gedolot called the Spanish Recension. It's a more complete work including all of the decisions of the Geon to 900 A.D. At this time, it was carried to North Africa or Spain. From here it went to Italy, France in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and Germany in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

The Babylonian Geonim collapsed in the mid 10<sup>th</sup> century. The Caliphate in the Middle East became permanently fractured. It was the twilight of Mesopotamia as the center of Eurasia. The succeeding Buyid period was an economic low point for Mesopotamia. Babylonian Jews appear to have anticipated the economic and political difficulties of the Gaon because prior to it, in the time of Charles the Bald, Babylonian correspondence with Catalan Jews peaked. It is said that teams of mules were required to carry the great amount of correspondence between Babylonia and Girona at this time (Bachrach, 112).

The growing number of Turks in the Tran Oxus region threatened the Abbasid Caliphate. The Caliphate used every method of flattery on them. They offered to convert the them to Islam. This was an irresistible opportunity for the Turks, who saw it as gaining the keys to the Caliphate (Golden). Large numbers of Turks entered service of the Caliphate as mercenaries (Ghulam) beginning around 830. The Abbasid Empire was fracturing, and they rapidly rose to the highest positions of government. There was intense hatred between the Arab population and the new Turks.

The establishment of Roman Christianity across the Rhine was the realization of an ancient goal that the Roman Empire failed to achieve.

In Mongolia, the Uyghur Khaganate was formed in 744. The Uyghurs adopted Manichaean Christianity as their main religion. Manichaeism was based in Babylonia.

In the 830s, interior nomadic trade routes expanded both towards the northwest and northeast extremities of Eurasia; Scandinavia and Manchuria (Beckwith, 2009). There was a remarkable symmetry to this development. In the West, the Black Sea was linked with Scandinavia, and in the east, China with Manchuria.

These northeast and northwest trade routes developed when the Abbasid Caliphate was at its peak. Charlemagne had conquered the Avars on the lower Danube, which opened the lower Danube route to European Jews. Constantinople experienced a resurgence and extended its influence into the Black Sea.

The impetus for the development of these new routes by nomads may have been the establishment of Islamic hegemony over the traditional Eurasian trade routes to West Asia or India. They could have been developed by an existing Turco-Iranian elite, such as the Ashina, because no other options remained.

The increased volume of long distance trade in these two regions initiated a new political phase for them. Manchuria was conquered by Khitan Mongolians by 900. Khitan Mongolians subsequently dominated Mongolia and Northern China as the Liao dynasty.

The legendary kings of Upsalla travelled to Norway and conquered it by 900, possibly with the help of Christianity. Probably between 900 and 950, Svedeland and Gotland were united into one kingdom by Eric the Victorious, the first historical king of Sweden. Eric the victorious may have been a Christian at some point. The southern exodus of Norsemen ushered in a new political phase for Europe.

Like the Norse and Khitans, the Magyars were also from a northern extremity in Russia along the Carpathian Mountains, and descended southward in the same timeframe.

As the conditions in the interior of Asia and the Middle East worsened, Jews increased their position in Iberia. This caused a renaissance in Al Andalus. Iberia served as an isolated, peripheral haven for Judaism and Sunni Islam during the broad disruptions in Asia between 830 and 1100. Al-Andalus housed the world's largest Jewish community. Cordoba surpassed Baghdad as the largest city in the world before 950 A.D.

Venice quickly built its fleet in the 830s to become a preeminent naval power.

The height of the Rhadanite activity was during Charles the Bald. 870 Kalonymos moves to Speyer.

Pope Nicholas I represented the High Point of the early Papacy. Nicolas refused to annul the marriage of Lothair II to Teutberga, daughter of Boso the Elder. She was barren so Lothair II could not have any heirs. After Lothair II, Lotharingia became divided between East and West Francia. This division was important to the development of Germany in the coming decades.

750: The Abbasids moved the capitol from Damascus to Baghdad. This reduced the Caliphate's influence over the Near East and Africa; most importantly, Egypt. Baghdad was new city built by the Abbasids. They did this to be closer to Persia (Beckwith). By 800, it was the largest city in the world; a medieval Babylon.

The Abbasid Army adapted the model of the Iranian Comitatus, but had several branches that represented the various regions it controlled. The Shakariyya, Ushrusaniyya, and Faraghina, were from their respective regions in greater Iran. These Iranians initially dominated military affairs. The Maghariba were Berbers, Africans, and/or Arab Egyptians.

The Iranian component of the Abbasids set the stage for a confrontation between Near Eastern and Central Asian forces for control of the caliphate. This was another phase of conflict for the Near East between Semitic and Iranian peoples.

This confrontation was delayed by the fact that the Abbasids were initially focused eastward, on trade with China and India, rather than towards the Near East. This, coupled with the ongoing factionalism for the caliphate, made the regions west of Mesopotamia enjoy privileges, and by the 10<sup>th</sup> century, they were mostly autonomous.

The early Abbasid Caliphate in the 8<sup>th</sup> century was dominated by the Barmakid family. The Barmakids were Iranians from Balkh. They served as Viziers to the Caliph during the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century. However, Al Rabi Ibn Yunus rivaled the vizier, and became vizier himself for a short time. His son, Al Fadl Ibn Al Rabi, held a similar position under Harun Al Rashid. Al Fadl was the primary rival of the Barmakids. He became vizier after the Barmakids were assassinated.

Harun Al Rashid realized that the Caliphate couldn't be kept together, so he divided it amongst his two sons. Al Amin represented the Arabs and westerners, while Al Ma'mun came to represent the Persians and Iranians.

Al Fadl was the chief supporter of Al Amin in the fourth fitna. He was forced into hiding for a period of time after Al Amin lost the war. Al Ma'mun was supported by Al Fadl Ibn Sahl, a Shi'ite Persian. Ibn Sahl became the power behind the throne before he was murdered, together with the Imam, in 817.

The Turkicization of the Middle East had several important effects. Almost immediately, it subverted both dominant forces in the Caliphate, the Iranian and the Arab elites. In the long term, it subverted the eastern parts of the realm, and eventually, Anatolia as well. This effect was due to continued migrations of Turks from Central Asia, and their east to west movement. These things, together with the removal of the Byzantines from the Near East, allowed for the establishment of an Egyptian Caliphate that controlled Syria and monopolized Near Eastern trade.

The Abbasids were able to assert Sunni authority into distant regions of the Caliphate in the early 9<sup>th</sup> century. The Sunni Aghlabids ruled in Ifriqiyya on behalf of the Abbasids from 800-909, until they were overthrown by the Shia Fatamids.

The Sunni Ziyadids were the first local dynasty in Yemen since Islam. They ruled from 819-1019. The Yurifids in Yemen were also Sunni and were Abbasid vassals, ruling from 847-997.

Al Ma'mun's general was Tahir. Tahir's career began the rise of the Iranian Tahirids as close allies of several Caliphs. The Tahirids built up a large principality covering most of Persia. A branch of the dynasty served as sheriffs of Baghdad. The Tahirids are seen as the start of the Iranian Intermezzo, but in actuality were loyal to the Caliphate and spoke Arabic. The Tahirids would lose influence in Baghdad due to the rise of the Turks.

In 811, Al Amin sent a large army towards against Al Ma'mun in Khorosan. It was defeated by Tahir, who proceeded west and took Baghdad. Al Amin was executed in 813. Al Ma'mun became the sole ruler. He chose to stay in Merv, in Iran, where his support base was.

Al Ma'mun feared Tahir and replaced him with Al Afshin, another Iranian. Al Afshin became the second most important military figure after Tahir. Tahir would execute Al Afshin for trying to overthrow him in 841.

Al Ma'mun sent Al Hasan Ibn Sahl to govern Baghdad. He was soon driven out of Baghdad by the Arabs because he was a Zoroastrian.

Al Ma'mun's reign was compromised by a popular resurgence of Shi'ism. He made Mu'tasim the official doctrine of the Caliphate.

Al Ma'mun was succeeded by Al Mu'tasim in 833. Al Mu'tasim was a younger son of Harun Al Rashid so he wasn't seen as a serious threat to the succession of his other sons. The rise of Al Mu'tasim was the result of his utilization of Turkic soldiers. In 814-15, during the Fourth Fitna, he began to acquire a loyal Turkic guard under the command of Itakh al-Khazari. He initially supported his uncle Ibrahim against Al Ma'mun, but the latter forgave him because his Turkic soldiers proved to be useful both inside and outside of Baghdad.

Al Mu'tasim built up his Turkic guard with imported slaves from the Samanid Empire. By the time Al Ma'mun died in 833, they probably numbered 3,000-4,000. They were the reason why he succeeded smoothly to the Caliphate in 833. The Turks were so unpopular in Baghdad that he was forced to build a new palace and city north of Baghdad, called Samarra, where he resided with them.

Ujayf Ibn Anabasa, backed by the Abna, led a conspiracy against Al Mu'tasim. They resented the rising influence of Turkic leaders over the Caliph, like Al Khazari and Ashinas. They instead supported Al Mu'tasim's younger brother, Al-Abbas, who was a successful general in the Byzantine wars.

Al Mu'tasim learned about the conspiracy in 838. He put Ashinas in charge of responding to it. Ujayf was executed, but it was just the beginning of the bloodshed. What followed amounted to a purging of the entire Abbasid military leadership. Key leaders were replaced with Turks. All of Abbas' male relations were murdered. The purge was strong enough that the Abna, the Arab army, ceased to be mentioned after this point.

The Arabs were removed from the Abbasid military. However, it still included numerous ambitious Turkic and Iranian nobility that were a centrifugal force working against orthodox Sunnism, and its confraternity with Jews and Christians. These forces peaked with decades of civil wars during the economic low point in the later half of the ninth century.

Al Mu'tasim adopted Mu'tasim like Al Ma'mun. He began an outright inquisition, the *Mihnah*, in order to impose his radical, centralized doctrine. This was a realization of the trend began by Harun Al Rashid's creation of the post of supreme judge, or *qadi al-qudat*.

The *Mihnah* was carried out by Mu'tasim's qadi, Ibn Abi Duwad. Abi Duwad fulfilled his duties so fully that it became a large scale upheaval of the Sunnite orthodoxy. A large scale purge of Sunni intellectuals took place. Any official who refused to convert to the new faith was executed. This was a profound upheaval because Islamic law was carried out by many local courts and magistrates. Abi Duwad was also a senior adviser to the Caliph at times.

The *Mihnah* was another way that Arabs were denied of their status in the Islamic world. While no school of Islamic law wanted to associate with the Mu'tazilites, it was an important step towards the subsequent consolidation of Islamic law in the 10<sup>th</sup> century by the Hanafi branch.

Al Mu'tasim continued the eastern policy of a close alliance with the Tahirid dynasty. A collateral branch of the Tahirids served as sheriffs Baghdad for decades. Tahir was succeeded by his son, Tahla, as governor of Khorasan. Another son, Abdullah, was made governor of Egypt and Arabia. When Tahla died in 828, Abdullah assumed his position in Khorasan, and continued to hold his positions in the west.

Over the 830's and 840's the, Tahirids built up domains in the east that amounted to most of Persia and Iran. They governed them loyally on behalf of the Abbasids. The Tahirid domains unraveled in the 860's. The Tahirid period of Persia and Central Asia was followed by the Iranian Intermezzo. A series of native Persian and Iranian dynasties took over, and lasted for about a century between Abbasid and Turkic rule.

The rise of the Tahirids and Turks in the 9<sup>th</sup> century was met with a series of rebellions in Armenia and Tabaristan by Iranians. The mountainous regions south and west of the Caspian Sea were the main hold out of Iranian culture because the Caliphate had trouble penetrating and crossing the rugged terrain. The rebellions sought overthrow the Caliphate and revive Persian language, Zoroastrianism, and a Sasanid dynasty.

Babak Khoramdin began the Zoroastrian Khurramite rebellion in Armenia. The movement began in 816. Two expeditions sent against him were unsuccessful. A third in 827/8 had mixed success. Babak was supported by the Byzantines.

Al Mu'tasim sent Al-Afshin against Babak in 836. Babak fled to the Byzantines in 838, but was captured by the Armenian king, and handed over to the Al Mu'tasim.

Al Afshin began to take measures to overthrow the Tahirids. In 839, another rebellion began in Tabaristan, south of the Caspian Sea. Its leader was Mazyar. The rebellion was put down in 839. Al

Afshin supported him, and was later executed for these acts. Afshin was charged with this conspiracy, and also with cooperating with Babak.

Al Afshin viewed the rise of the Tahirid dynasty with jealousy. At some point, it would also have threatened his ancestral Samarkand. His support of Mazyar was intended to overthrow the Tahirids.

After the Iranian revolutions Tabaristan failed, the region became a center of Shi'ism. The Alid dynasty had moved from Mecca to Tabaristan and started the Zaydi movement 860's, in direct opposition to the ambitions of the Tahirids.

Abadallah Ibn Tahir died in 845. The Turkic faction began to overtly seize power.

Al Wathiq was victorious against the Byzantines in Anatolia in 845. A six year truce was concluded in 846. He subsequently dealt with many uprisings.

Two of the leading officials during Al-Mutawakkil's reign were Ubayd Allah Ibn Yahya Ibn Khagan and Al-fath Ibn Khagan. Their name suggests that they descended from Turkic Nobility. Ubayd Allah became Vizier in 851. Both were major opponents of the Shia Alids.

Al-Mutawakkil was assassinated by his Turkic Guard in 861. This started Fifth Fitna, which lasted until 866. During this time, Turks solidified their control over the Caliphate. However, many centrifugal forces worked for the control of the Caliphate at this time.

The Emirate of Mosul in Northern Mesopotamia was the most central region to break away during the Anarchy. It became ruled by the Hamdanids, a Shi'ite dynasty. Despite being Shi'ites, they were close allies of Baghdad.

The Hamdanid dynasty peaked during Nasir Al Dalwa (r. 935-967). His brother Ali was made Emir of Aleppo.

After the Anarchy at Samarra, the Abbasid viziership became contested by two factions. The Ibn Furat family were Persian Shi'ites. The Al Jarrah family were Nestorian Christians.

Al Mu'tadid was Caliph from 870-892. However, power was held for almost the entire time by his brother Muwaffaq. Muwaffaq ruled as military regent after having suppressed the Zanj rebellion and other threats.

Muwaffaq made Sa'id Ibn Makhlad, a Nestorian Christian, quasi-Vizier from 878-885.

Ismail Bulbul, a Shi'ite, was Vizier during the reign of Al Mu'tamid, from 878-892. While he was technically the Vizier, he was restrained by Sa'id Ibn Makhlad until the latter died in 885. After this, he gained influence.

Bulbul recruited the Ibn Furat brothers into his administration, which began the rise of that family to the head of Caliphal politics in the early 10<sup>th</sup> century.

Al Muktafi died in 908. Ubayd Allah supported Al Mu'tazz to become Caliph, but he was overthrown after a day and then strangled.

Ibn al Mudabbir was a Persian that arose to power during the reigns of Al-Wathiq and Al-Mutawakkil. Mutawakkil gave him a position similar to the Vizier. Ubayd Allah perceived him a threat, and had him imprisoned in 854, but he was released soon after. He managed to have Al Mudabbir sent away to be fiscal administrator of Syria.

By 861, Al Mudabbir had assumed the same position in Egypt. He imposed heavy taxation and attempted to establish monopolies. These actions made him despised by the Egyptians.

Al Mu'tazz appointed a Ghilman, Ahmad Ibn Tulun, as governor of Egypt in 868. Ahmad's father, Tulun, was leader of the personal guard of Al Mu'tasim, and an acquaintance of Ubayd Allah. His governorship of Egypt brought him into direct conflict with Al Mudabbir, whom he defeated.

When the caliphate unraveled in the 870's, Tulun was made emir of Egypt by Al Mu'tadid, and the Caliph married Tulun's daughter. The Aghlabids in Ifriqiyya also ruled independently on behalf of the Abbasids.

Ibn Tulun proclaimed allegiance to the Caliph. His rule was very good for the Egyptian economy. He built a palace that was intended to rival Samarra.

Beginning in 876, the military regent, Muwaffaq, tried to overthrow him. In 878, Ibn Tulun defeated Al-Muwaffaq and annexed Syria. This made him in control of Egypt and the Levant. He now controlled most of the Near East, and the border regions with Byzantine Empire. He continued to struggle with Al-Muwaffaq supporters. Ahmad died in 884.

Ibn Tulun's son, Khumarawayh, continued the conflict with Muwaffaq. He was successful and extended the Tulunid domains into the borders of Mesopotamia and captured Tarsus.

The state became insolvent and instable during Khumarawayh. He was the last notable Tulunid. Abbasids invaded and restored direct Abbasid rule in Egypt 905, but Egypt was highly unstable in the first two decades of the 10<sup>th</sup> century.

The Zanj Rebellion (869-883) created a government in southern Mesopotamia and Eastern Arabia that lasted a decade. The rebels collected taxed and minted their own coins.

The Zanj Rebels together with the Tulunid dynasty of Egypt landlocked the Abbasid caliphate at a time when its leadership was Persian. This was another manifestation of the Peripheral Near Eastern strategy.

In addition to being in a constant state of revolt, the Egyptians also sided with the Fatamids against the Abbasids. The Fatamids were established in the Magrheb, and began to periodically encroach on and invade Egypt.

The first Fatamid invasion of Egypt occurred in 914-15. Due to his failure to contain the invasion, the Abbasids replaced Takin Al Khazari with Dhuka Al Rumi, a Greek mercenary. The Fatamids laid siege to



Barka in Palestine for 18 months beginning in 917. The second invasion of Egypt was in 919-921. Several Egyptians were executed for conspiring with the Fatamids. Dhuka died in 919, and Takin Al Khazari was reinstated as governor, and remained almost continuously until his death in 933.

The Tulunid realms were financially administered by the Al Madhara'i family. They dominated the finances of the Tulunids, during the subsequent Abbasid period, and during the first Ikshidid governor of Egypt.

The first Al Madhara'i was Abu Bakr. He was a bureaucrat from Samarra. He followed Ibn Tulun to Egypt and was appointed head of finance in 879. He died in 884. One of his son's, Ali, became head of finance in Egypt, while the other one, Al Husayn, did the same in Syria.

Ali became the Vizier of the second and third Tulunids. However, the third Tulunid reigned briefly, and they were both murdered in 896.

Ali had two sons who served the same role at different times. The first one, Ahmad, became the next vizier of the Tulunids until the recapture of Egypt by the Abbasids in 904. Ahmad's uncle, Al Husayn, was still administrator in Syria, and had maintained closer relations with Baghdad. The Abbasids deported all of the Madhara'i family to Baghdad, except for Al Husayn, who was made head of finance in Egypt.

Al Husayn was moved back to Syria in 913, while his nephew replaced him in Egypt. Both were removed in 917. Al Husayn served in Egypt again from 919-923, and both in Egypt and Syria from 926 until his death in 929. Al Husayn was succeeded by his son, Abu Bakr Muhammad. Abu Makr held the position from 930-933.

The Abbasid Vizier, Al-Fadl Ibn Al Furat, sanctioned the invasion of Egypt by the Turk, Ibn Tughj. This started the Ikshidid dynasty of Egypt. Abu Bakr lost his status upon the arrival of Ibn Tughj in 935 and went into hiding. However, after the death of Al Fadl in 939, he regained his position and became highly influential.

The career of Abu Bakr peaked when he became the regent of Ibn Tughj's son in 946. However, he was soon imprisoned by Ja'far, the son of Al Fadl. He was later released and went into retirement. Ja'far was vizier of the Ikshidids from 946 until the conquest of Egypt by the Fatamids in 969.

Al Ikshid founded the Ikshidid dynasty, which ruled Egypt from 939 until 969, when it was conquered by Kutama Berbers. Al Ikshid was originally the the governor of Damascus. He was also the made governor of Egypt in 933. However, he didn't enter Egypt until 935, during a time of intense factional violence in Cairo.

In 939, the Abbasid military tyrant, Ibn Ra'iq, annexed Syria. This enraged Al-Ikshid. The two eventually agreed on a border in southern Syria.

A conflict between the Shia Hadmanids and Al Ikshid. Al Ikshid was granted governorship of Syria by the Caliphate again in 944.

Nasir Al Dawla, whose regnal name means “defender of the State”, tried to gain control of the Caliphate in Baghdad during the early 940’s. His lack of support by the Caliph led to the Buyids conquering Baghdad in 945.

After failing in Baghdad, Nasir Al Dawla focused on Syria to the west. He captured Aleppo from the Ikshidids and appointed his brother to rule that city.

Sayf Al Dawla of Aleppo died in 967, and Nasir Al Dawla died in 968. This was the end of the powerful Hamdanid dynasties in Syria and Jazira. The Byzantines captured Antioch in 969, in the same year as the Fatamid conquest of Cairo. Sayf Al Dawla’s successor was S’ad Al Dawla, who became a tributary of the Byzantines in 969.

The Byzantines reached Jerusalem in 976, but failed to take it. The death of the emperor that same year halted the expansion, but they retained Syria.

Syria became contested between the Byzantines and the Fatamids for the next fifty years. However, the two came to an agreement on the division of Syria for most of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The Fatamids for the most part pursued a conservative policy towards Syria in order to prevent a war with the Byzantines.

The Oghuz Turks formed an important phase in the development of Islam by first conquering Iran in the 1000’s, and then gradually conquering India in the subsequent centuries. In this way, they were an eastern phase of Islamic expansion that followed the Arab period. The Normans were to Roman Christianity what the Turks were to Sunni Islam in the same time period.

Central Asia was the primary strategic region for Asia during the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries. Nomadic empires stemming from this region continued to dominate Asian politics as they had since the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> Millenium. Sunni Islam was committed to the wider theatre of Asia, and therefore Central Asia, until it achieved the conquest of Northern India.

Sunni Islam involvement in Central Asia was also to suppress the growth of Iranian Empires that may threaten the Abbasids in the Middle East. The primary obstacle to political development of the Silk Road cities in Central Asia was the continued influx of nomads from Mongolia, which was due to the continuous state of warfare in Mongolia. This subsuming force helped Sunni Islam by keeping the Iranian city states in under threat of constant invasion, and delayed their political expansion. When nomadic pressures from Mongolia subsided, however, Iranian influence expanded.

It’s not unthinkable that Islamic interests were active in Mongolian politics themselves in order to continue to destabilize Central Asia. Manichaeism and Nestorianism had a presence in Mongolia and were based in Babylonia. This shows that the conduit for diplomatic exchange between Mongolia and Babylonia existed.

Manichaeism was the official religion of the Uyghur Khaganate from 744-840, which was when Islam reached central Asia. The Khitan Mongols, who conquered Mongolia and caused most of the migrations after about 1000 A.D. also had a Manichaean following. The Borjigin clan of Temujin practiced Nestorianism still in the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

In Central Asia, the period following Abbasid control, and before the rise of the Turks is called the Iranian Intermezzo. From 870-1000, a number of native Iranian dynasties emerged. The Saffarids, Buyids, and Samanids were the primary ones. The Buyids and other Persians who bordered the Abbasids were Shi'ite, which in turn prompted their Iranian adversaries to the East, in Central Asia, to insincerely convert to Sunnism. Although nominally Sunni, these Central Asian Iranian dynasties had no loyalty to the Abbasids, and were sponsoring a revival in Iranian culture. The Persian renaissance started by the Saffarids continued under the Ghaznavid and Seljuk Turks, who increasingly fused it with Sunni'te Islam. The Seljuks then spread this Persianized Islamic culture throughout the Middle East.

The independent Iranian dynasties sprung up after the decline of the Tahirids, who were close allies of the Caliphate. The Abbasids tried to utilize the Saffarids in the same manner as the Tahirids, but the Saffarids knew that the Caliphate was weakened, and sought to overthrow it.

Nasr Ibn Ahmed received Transoxiana as a fief from the Caliph, Mu'tamid. His capitol was Samarkand. He appointed his brother, Ismail, as governor of Bukhara. Civil war broke out between them in 888. Nasr's death made Ismail the sole ruler, and Bukhara became the capitol of the Samanids.

Ismail doubled the extent of the Samanid Empire, primarily at the expense of the Saffarids.

The Saffarids were overcome by the Samanids to the East, and the Buyids in Persia. The Samanids conquered all of Central Asia in the early 10<sup>th</sup> century. The Samanids and the Buyids then entered into a protracted border struggle centered on the city of Rai. This wore down both entities, and allowed for the rebellion of Oghuz Turks in Samanid Empire. The attempted conversion of the Samanid king to Shi'ism created political turmoil in the Samanid Empire that furthered its downfall (Grousset,).

The introduction of the Turks to Islam also opened up the steppes to Islamic missionaries (Golden). Islam became a common religion across the Russian steppes by 1000 A.D. The Kharahanids in Kashgar, the farthest eastern region of Iran, were converted to Islam around 900. The Volga Bulgars converted to Islam in mass in 922, possibly in response to the Judaism of the Khazars.

The Kharahanids conquered Samarkand in 999. Around this time, the Turks overthrew the Samanids. Central Asia was Turkicized and permanently Islamized by these two events. The rise of Turks in Central Asia ended the Iranian Intermezzo.

A Turk named Alp Tigin was appointed as governor of Khorosan by the Samanid, Abd Al Malik I, in 961. Al Malik I died in that same year, and Mansur I Ibn Nuh dismissed Alp Tigin from his position. Alp Tigin went to Balkh, but was driven from that city by the Samanids. He then went to Ghazni, in the Punjab region, and took control of that city.

Alp Tigin was succeeded by his son in law, Mahmud. The location of Ghazni was ideal for invading Northern India. Having achieved official recognition by the Abbasids, Mahmud invaded India over a dozen times. This began a new phase of Islamic conquest in Northern India.

Mahmud's first invasion overthrew a Fatamid governor who was installed in Multan. Prior to the Fatamids, the Qarmatians had dominated Multan for some time.

Mahmud of Ghazni was the first in a series of Turkic invasions into Northern India that culminated in the establishment of the Dehli Sultanate in 1206. This set the stage for the Islamic invasions of South India from the mid 13<sup>th</sup> to the mid 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, and the establishment of the Bahmani Sultanate in the Deccan region.

The golden age of Jews in Al-Andalus lasted from about 912-1066. This corresponds exactly to the peak of volatility in Eurasia. In view of the events, their focus on Iberia in the 10<sup>th</sup> century becomes understandable.

Jewish influence peaked during the 10<sup>th</sup> century after the accession of Abd-ar-Rahman III in 912. Jews occupied some of the highest positions in government during the 10<sup>th</sup> century. The situation began to deteriorate after the death of Al-Hakam in 976. The caliphate entered into decline and the position of Jews there suffered. This peaked during the Granada Massacre of 1066, during which over 4,000 Jews were massacred in a single day. The invasion of the Berber Almoravids in 1090 led to further problems.

The Fatamids conquered Cairo in 969, in the same year that the Byzantines captured Damascus. Egypt had become the wealthiest part of the Caliphate in the late 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries. In the 1000's, the Fatamids managed to dominate the Hijaz and monopolize Indo Arabian trade.

While Shi'ite, the Fatamid Caliphate ruled over a Sunni population, in addition to many Christians and Jews. This compelled them to practice a moderate form of Shia Islam that was tolerant towards Christians and Jews. Many Jews traveled to Fatamid Egypt in the 1000's. Also, many people converted to Judaism in Fatamid Egypt. (jvl.com)

The Buyid dynasty in Persia was another contemporary Shia Emirate. The Buyids were Daylamites from the southern end of the Caspian Sea. They moved south and conquered Fars in 934. They are considered to be a part of the Iranian Intermezzo together with the Sunni Dynasties in Central Iran. In 945, they conquered Baghdad. Babylonia and Persia was combined into a single Emirate. The Abbasids were ruled as subjects. They retained religious authority and some control over Baghdad.

The Buyid period was a low point for commerce in Mesopotamia. It was characterized by lawlessness and brigandage. This was because the Fatamids were able to divert all Arabian trade through Egypt.

The Shia period corresponds to the golden age of anti-rabbinical Karaite Judaism, and Karaite Judaism shows influences from Shi'ite Islam. Karaites may have comprised up to 40% of the Jews in the Near East. Karaites also established a center in Constantinople, and resided in Crimea. They obtained high ranking positions in Egypt.

Shi'ism proliferated in the Near East after Jews had shifted their centers to places in the far west newly conquered by Islam and Christianity. After the end of the Geonim, the work of promoting the Talmud was done from locations around the Mediterranean. By 1000 A.D., the Rhineland Ashkenazi communities in Europe replaced Babylonia as the de facto center of Rabbinical Judaism. The Talmud succeeded in becoming the tractate of world Jewry around 1050 A.D.

The downfall of the Caliphate heralded in a long period of instability for Western Asia as well as for Central Asia and the Silk Road in general. Since Babylonia stood only to benefit from the interior Silk Road after Indo-Arabian trade became diverted entirely through Egypt, its economic significance permanently faded. These shifts ended the era of the Babylonian Geonic academies, and of Mesopotamia as the hitherto timeless crossroads of the ancient world.

In the 11<sup>th</sup> century, Egypt monopolized Indo Arabian commerce. This was indicative of the trend of shifting to the periphery. The Near East as a whole remained important as a territorial imperative for Egypt and the Mediterranean.

The Khitan Mongolian expansion drove nomadic migrations during their most intense phase, circa 1000-1250 A.D. The first effect of this was downfall of the already weakened Kimek Khaganate in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century. The Kimeks and Kipchaks as a result migrated into Central Asia, then Russia, and destabilized those regions. This caused instability in the Oghuz Yabgu confederation and increased the migrations of Oghuz Turks into the Samanid Empire. It also caused the migration of Cumans and Pechengs into the Balkans where they became a threat to Constantinople.

The Shia period in the Middle East, and the Iranian Intermezzo in Central Asia were ended by the rise of the Oghuz Turks. Again, the eastern enemies of western orthodox religions were being dealt with by invaders from further east.

This began when Turkic ghulam overthrew the Samanid Empire and created an independent state in Central Asia. Later, as the Seljuks, they entered the near East. They conquered Baghdad from the Buyids in 1055. Their recognition of the Abbasid Caliphate began a Sunni revival in Persia and Central Asia. In the Crusader era, they conquered the Fatamid Empire as the Zengid Dynasty of Syria.

Another group of Oghuz Turks moved northwest at this time and displaced the Cumans. The Cumans then permanently moved into the territory of the Kievan Rus and also invaded Eastern Europe. Some Cumans entered into the service of the Byzantines. Their defection from the Greeks to the Seljuk Turks at Manzikert in 1071 was a devastating turning point for the Byzantine Empire.

The Khitan Mongols began trends that climaxed during the conquests of Genghis Khan. The conquest of Constantinople, China, Egypt, and India by Turks or Turco Mongolians began with the expansion of Khitan Mongols. The Turks were pushed out of the Middle East by the Mongols and conquered peripheral regions, Egypt, Anatolia, and India.

The direct relationship between the development of the West, and of the Abrahamic religions, to the nomadization of Asia continued. The Seljuk Turks reached the Byzantine Empire in 1048-1049, and the Roman Christian Church signaled its permanent separation from the Eastern Orthodox Church in 1054.

The rise of the Seljuks corresponded to the decline of the Fatamids in the mid 11<sup>th</sup> century. The decline of the Fatamids should also be view in relation to the economic growth of Europe at this time, and the flourishing of Jewish Rishonism scholarship there. The Fatamids recovered politically in the later 11<sup>th</sup> century, but its government was dominated by military dictators.

Malik Shah was in competition with the Kara Khanids for control of Central Asia. The Seljuks captured Samarkand in 1089, and even marched into Kashgar and Khotan. The Kharakhanids became their vassals.

Nizam al Mulk was the vizier of the Seljuk Sultanate during its peak. He ensured its support of the Abbasid Caliphate. He was originally a Ghaznavid official in Rey who switched sides to the Seljuks at an early time. When Tughril died, he supported Alp Arslan. He was vizier for a time under Alp Arslan.

Alp Arslan was assassinated shortly after the Battle of Manzikert. This occurred while he was in the east preparing to fight the Karakhanids. He was probably assassinated by Nizam al Mulk. This was the territorial height of the Seljuks.

Al-Mulk intended to put Malik Shah I on the throne. He was opposed by Alp Arslan's brother Qavurt, who was supported by most of the Seljuk Turks. Al-Mulk and Malik Shah recruited an army made up of Armenian and Arab Ghilman to oppose them. The defection of some of the Turks led to the defeat of Qavurt.

Al-Mulk became the power behind the throne for the next 20 years, during the entire reign of Malik Shah I. Al Mulk's advocacy for the Abbasids in the Seljuk Empire, while not the beginning of the relationship between these two entities, began a political revival of the Abbasid Caliphate.

Malik Shah I recognized the authority of the Abbasids throughout the Sultanate. Muqtadi (1075-1094) became the first Caliph to exercise any authority outside Baghdad since the Buyids. He married Malik Shah's daughter. When she left for Isfahan with her son, the relationship between the Caliph and the Sultan deteriorated. Malik Shah's assassination shortly after was mostly likely ordered by the Caliph.

The position that al Mulk secured for the Abbasids in the Seljuk Empire facilitated its political revival fifty years later. The political footing of the Abbasid Caliphate in the Seljukid Empire allowed for a number of Sunni religious developments to occur that facilitated the Sunni-Abbasid renaissance in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries.

al-Mulk started the first universities in the Islamic world, called Nezamiyehs. The major one in Baghdad became the intellectual center of the Islamic world, until its destruction by the Mongols.

It was during the time of Al Mulk that the Fatamid Imamate lost power in the caliphate to military despots. The brother of the deposed Imam, Nizar, was defeated by one in 1095. After this, Hassan i Sabbah, a prominent d'awi, fled to Persia, and would later found the Nizari sect, more commonly known as the Assassins. Tradition accounts of a rivalry between Hassan and Al-Mulk, after which Hassan fled, conquered Alamut castle, and established it as the base of the Assassins.

Sufism, which had made Islam the majority religion in the Middle East about a century earlier, developed a form of monastic orders during the 12<sup>th</sup> century. These spread widely over the next two centuries, to Sub Saharan Africa, India and Southeast Asia. Spreading into these extremities allowed it to proliferate in these regions during *pax Monogolica*. This pushed Islam into Africa and south-southeast Asia concurrently with *pax Mongolica* in Asia.

In the Middle East, Sufis proliferated concepts of chivalry that led to the development of military religious Futuwwa orders. The Futuwwa proliferated in the Crusader era and became the mainstay of the Abbasid Empire. They were how the Abbasids to defeated and removed Seljuk suzerainty.

The Caliphate also succeeded unifying Islamic law into the Hanafi discipline.

The death of Al Mulk was followed by the Crusades, which assisted the Abbasid Caliphate in its continued reestablishment in the Near East and Egypt.

The result of the Crusades was the reestablishment of Abbasid religious authority in Egypt. This was done by the Ayyubids.

The end of the Jewish golden age in Al-Andalus and North Africa corresponded to the economic growth of Western Europe, the Crusades, and the Sunni'ite revival in the Middle East. **Iberia and North Africa served a safe haven for Jews** that allowed them to prepare the next phase of a long term Mediterranean strategy. The simultaneous revival of the Roman Catholic Church and the Abbasid Caliphate was the expansion of influence eastward after the trend of western contraction and isolation in Iberia during the mid 10<sup>th</sup> century.

The major influx of Judaism into Europe after 1000 A.D. corresponded to the rise of Roman Christianity. This rise of Christianity at this time was represented by the East west Schism of 1054, the Gregorian reforms, and the Investiture controversy.

There were three periods of marked prosperity in Medieval Europe. These are called the "Medieval Renaissances". They were the Carolingian Renaissance, the Ottonian Renaissance, and the Renaissance of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The Carolingian Renaissance was in Gaul. It corresponded with the Carolingian Jews.

The Ottonian Renaissance was focused in the kingdoms of Germany and Italy. It corresponded to the growth and prosperity of Ashkenazi Jews in the Rhine Valley. The 12<sup>th</sup> century renaissance was based on the development of centralized Monarchies in Europe, and was more or less the beginning of what became premodern or Renaissance Europe as it emerged from of the Middle Ages. This corresponded to the Rishonim period of Jewish scholarship, which had notably spread to Southern France.

Yehuda HaKohen Ben Meir, also known as Yehuda Leontin (the lion) was a Rabbi in Mainz in the late 10<sup>th</sup> to early 11<sup>th</sup> centuries. He was the teacher of Gershom ben Judah (b. 960), but also influenced the works of Rashi.

Gershom ben Judah operated a Yeshiva in Mainz. During his lifetime, Mainz replaced the the Babylonian Geonim as the center of Jewish scholarship and law. Gershom ben Judah is most famous for a set of four basic laws that remain binding on the Ashkenazi community today.

Rashi (d. 1105) was a medieval Tosafist. He traveled to Mainz and studied under the students of Gershom ben Judah (d. 1040). Rashi's commentary on the Talmud has been included in every modern edition since its first printing in 1520.

The Sefer Raza Raba was an extinct compilation of Jewish Mysticism. It was compiled in Babylonia, probably late in the ninth century. The act of compiling such a work could have been driven by the uncertainties that the Babylonian Jews faced at that time.

Aspects of the Sefer Raza Raba appeared in the first medieval European work of Jewish mysticism, the Bahir, in 12<sup>th</sup> century Provence. Some attribute the Bahir to Abraham Ben David "the pious", known by the acronym Ravad. Others attribute it to his son, Isaac the Blind (c. 1160-1235). What is known is that the Bahir was published in Isaac's time, and that he was the foremost expert on it.

The transmission of mystical Judaism to the Rhineland in the 9<sup>th</sup> century corresponds to the development of German hegemony in Europe. Its transmission to Provence in the 12<sup>th</sup> century corresponds to the early development of French European hegemony, and to the rise of Western Europe in general that began in the 12<sup>th</sup> century; called the 12<sup>th</sup> Century Renaissance.

### Kingdom of Provence

The Bosonids descend from Boso the Elder (d. 855). He was both the count of Turin in Northwest Italy, and count of Valois, in the far north of France. Boso V was his grandson. Boso V married his sister to Charles the Bald in 870, and went on to serve the emperor in high positions. In 870, he was made Count of Lyon and Vienne. In 872, he was appointed as the chamberlain to Charles' heir, Louis the Stammerer. In 876, he married Ermengard of Italy, the only daughter of Louis II of Italy, and became viceroy to the Kingdom of Italy. He became Count of Provence in 877. When Charles the Bald undertook a second campaign into Italy, Boso joined a rebellion against him. When Charles died in October of 877, the rebelling nobility forced Charles' successor to recognize them.

Pope John VIII was in a desperate situation with the Muslims in southern Italy. He initially appealed to Charles for help, but now switched to Boso. His plans ultimately failed; Muslims continued to plunder the Papal States, and the Pope was forced to pay them tribute. Boso and Pope John the VIII grew very close, and the Pope adopted him as his son. In 878, Boso sheltered the Pope in Provence because of Muslim attacks.

In 879, the nobility in Provence elected Boso as the successor to Louis the Stammerer, king of West Francia. Boso was the first non-Carolingian king to be elected. This created the Kingdom of Provence, which would become Lower Burgundy, and then Arles.

Burgundy factored heavily in Italian Politics in the late 9<sup>th</sup> and early 10<sup>th</sup> century. The Bosonids provided a King of Italy. By the 10<sup>th</sup> century, however, the Kingdom of Italy fell apart, and the crown only symbolized a loose affiliation to the Pope. The papacy also collapsed.



Boso was not only active in Italian and Burgundian politics. He also expanded northward and temporarily created an enlarged Burgundy. His kingdom reached as far as Autun, in east-central France. It notably included Lyons.

It also included Besancon at the time when Baume Abbey was being revitalized there as the forerunner of the Cluniacs. A daughter of Boso V married Rudolph I of upper Burgundy, who gave protection to Baume Abbey. Another daughter of his married William I, Duke of Aquitaine, who founded Cluny Abbey.

The northern territories of the Kingdom of Provence fragmented in the 880's. Upper Burgundy passed to a branch of the Elder Welf dynasty. Western Burgundy, including Lyons, went to Richard the Justiciar, who fought his relative, Hugh, and supported the election of Rudolph I to Upper Burgundy. Rudolph received Lower Burgundy from Hugh of Provence in 933 in exchange for relinquishing his claim to the crown of Italy. This created a united Burgundy, called the Kingdom of Arles. Conrad III, or the Peaceful, ruled from 937 to 993. His daughters married into both the Ottonian and Robertian dynasties; the latter were the ancestors of the Capetians.

Hugh the Abbot was another member of the Elder Welfs.

Around 889, Muslim pirates established a base on the coast of Provence. In addition to piracy, they regularly raided the countryside, making the region lawless for decades. By 911 they controlled the Alpine passes into Italy. They subsequently made attacks into Provence, northwestern Italy, and southern France. The Muslims cut off exchanges between Italy, France, and Germany for decades. They were expelled from Fraxinet in 973, and the passes were reopened.

To the north of Burgundy, the Ardennes Verdun dynasty was founded in Lotharingia around 870. It dominated Upper and Lower Lorraine in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries. The dynasty had a close relationship to the medieval Roman Catholic Church. Adalbero, Archbishop of Rheims, pushed for and secured the crown to Hugh Capet, the first King from the Capetian line. Godfrey III married Matilda of Tuscany, defended Lombardy from the Holy Roman Emperor, and backed some of the greatest medieval Popes. Sigfried became the first Count of Luxembourg in 963, from which the Holy Roman Emperors from the House of Luxembourg descend.

## Magyars

The Magyars were defeated by the Khazars and settled in "Etelkoz". This was their name for a region between the lower Danube and Don Rivers. From here, large scale Magyar raids into Central and Western Europe began in 881 with the invasion of East Francia. In 892, they allied with Arnulf, King of East Francia, in an invasion of Moravia. This initiated the downfall of Moravia.

The Magyars invaded and settled in "Hungary" from 895-907. From 907-955, they marauded across Europe with little opposition and collected tribute. They were especially unrivaled before the 930s.

The papacy was seriously checked during the reigns of Louis the Pious and his sons; the high point of the Carolingians.

After the civil wars between Louis' sons, the Papacy was able to free itself from imperial oversight. The climax of the Carolingian papacy was during Pope Nicolas I. The subsequent decline of the Papacy corresponds with the decline of the Abbasid Caliphate, and the golden age of Ummayyad Spain.

The breakup of the Carolingian Empire delayed the inevitable question of royal authority over the Papal States. The Papal States were nominally protected by Carolingian successor kingdoms for remainder of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, but were not strong enough to challenge Papal authority.

Nicholas and his successor, Adrian II, were both subjected to oversight of the King of Italy, Louis II. Louis provided them with crucial defense from the Saracens of Southern Italy. Louis II died in 875. John XIII appealed to Charles the Bald and Boso of Provence for protection against the Saracens. His plans failed and he was forced to pay tribute to the Saracens.

The focus of Roman Catholicism shifted to the Diocese of Mainz during this low point. This shift corresponds to the migration of the Jewish Kalonymos family from Lucca to Worms and the establishment of the proto Ashkenazi community there, c. 870.

This extension of Judaism and Christianity into the Upper Rhine region, Allemania or "Franconia", corresponded to the region becoming the center of wider European politics. Franconia was the nucleus of the Kingdom of Germany. From 950-1250 Germany was the hegemonic power in Europe, after which it shifted to France.

After the Carolingians, there was no foreign ruler to back the papacy. The Papal states fell into disarray, and the papacy became contested by local factions. This situation lasted for a century, until Otto I entered Italy and filled the role that the Carolingians had.

In the wake of the Carolingian Empire, the first resemblance of investiture appeared. The envoys of the Carolingian Emperors were called Missus Dominici. Charles the Bald filled these positions solely with bishops and abbots. This was a step for the Church, but it still did not have wide powers to appoint these ecclesiastical seats. Louis the German does not appear to have issued Missus Dominici, and the position subsequently disappeared.

Pope Stephen V begged the Byzantines for support against the Saracens in Italy. The Byzantines reoccupied Southern Italy from 885-6.

Benedict IX was pope from 900-903. He crowned Louis the Blind of Provence as Holy Roman Emperor. However, Louis was defeated by Berengar in 903. The papacy lost its character and became controlled by a local family, the counts of Tusculum, until 961. This period was the absolute low point of the medieval papacy. Local factions in Rome played a major part in the Papacy until 1048.

Arnulf was succeeded in 899 by his son, Louis the Child, who was six years old. He was the last Carolingian King of East Francia. He was elected as a pawn of the nobility and church. During his reign,

Hatto remained the most important adviser. Louis' reign was marked by incessant Magyar raids into Germany.

During the widespread turmoil from about 830-960, the Abrahamic religions focused on the two primary developing regions of Europe, Iberia and Germania. These two regions flanked Western Europe, or Gaul, so that in the proceeding century, Catholicism could assert its control over that region. This occurred with the consolidation of the Capetian Crown from 1100-1250. The Jewish communities in southern France flourished during this time, in the early Capetian, or the Crusades period.

910 Cluniac reforms. Benedictine Abbey at Cluny founded. The movement then spread through France, England, Italy and Spain. The purpose of the movement was to separate the monastic order from secular interference, and to elevate the pope as the supreme leader. Cluniacs defined the idea of feudal monarchy applied by France and other European kingdoms in the High Middle Ages.

Hatto supported Conradines against the Babenbergs in their conflict for control of Franconia. Hatto violated an agreement of safe conduct by abducting and executing the last Babenberg. He secured the election of Conrad when Louis the Child died in 911. He supported Conrad against Henry the Fowler to the extent that the Saxons thought that Conrad's position was owed to Hatto. Hatto's primary goal was to keep Henry from acquiring Thuringia, where the Archbishopric held large tracts of land. Hatto was accused of complicity in a plot to assassinate Henry; in return, archiepiscopal lands in Saxony and Thuringia were ravaged.

Conrad was the first non-Carolingian king, and the first to be elected by the nobility.

Otto I

Charlemagne conquered the Saxons after 20 years of warfare. This removed them from European politics for over century. Henry the Fowler rebelled against Conrad I and became king in 918.

The rise of the Saxon Ottonian dynasty was opposed at every step by the Church. The Saxons were located in far Northern Germany, so their projection of power southward to Swabia, Bavaria and Italy was a slow and steady descent. It began when Henry succeeded his father as Duke of Saxony, in 912.

Their remoteness was favorable to the church both in Allemannia and Italy. It made the Saxon dynasty preferable to another local or proximate dynasty. It was especially preferable to a Bavarian dynasty, since Bavaria was well positioned to invade Italy.

Henry the Saxon, or *the Fowler*, sought to expand southward into Swabia, which was the heart of the kingdom of Germany. This included Mainz, Worms and Speyer. He became the primary enemy of Conrad I, who came from Swabia, and was backed by Hatto I, Archbishop of Mainz.

Despite being enemies, Conrad believed that Henry was the only one able to hold the kingdom together, and to defend it from Magyars. On his deathbed, Conrad elected Henry as his successor.

Henry inherited Conrad's conflict with Bavaria. Arnulf of Bavaria's alliance with the Magyars ruined his reputation. Decades of Magyar raids helped form the Kingdom of Germany. Henry founded the Kingdom and passed it to his son, Otto.

Otto spent most of his reign consumed in politics north of the Alps and in Burgundy. The Archbishop of Mainz was one of his primary opponents and joined in rebellions against him. The Hungarian invasions ended with the Battle of Lechfield in 955. Otto I wasn't ready to establish direct rule over Italy until after this time.

The Ottonian period was a formative period for Catholicism outside of the Papal States. Previous to this, ecclesiastical positions were mostly filled by local nobility who were nominally attached to the church. The positions were primarily used for personal gain.

During the Ottonian period, large territories became attached to dioceses in central Germany. This created "prince-bishoprics". They were granted to the church by Henry and Otto I as a way to check the power of the tribal Duchies that challenged the imperial crown. The bishops came to rule their own small territories that were attached to the Diocese. They were, in theory, directly subordinate to the pope.

The dioceses with prince bishoprics included the major commercial centers of Germany. Cologne, Trier, Worms, Mainz, and Speyer were all prince bishoprics. Mainz controlled Speyer as a suffragant. Rhineland bishops protected Jews in their realms.

Otto II (r. 973) His mother was Adelaide of Italy. She was a close supporter of Cluny and Odilo. She and her daughter-in-law, the Byzantine princess Theophanu, had an ongoing feud. This caused Otto II to become estranged from his mother.

When Otto II died, Theophanu became the regent of Otto III, but died five years later. Adelaide of Italy Adelaide together with Willigis, Archbishop of Mainz, became regent of Otto II for three years until he came of age.

Otto III was occupied by rebellious subjects on the frontiers of his empire, especially the Slavs. This occupied him and reduced his ability to interfere in Italy. His death was followed by a succession crisis.

After the death of Otto III, Henry imprisoned the archbishop of Cologne and his brother, the bishop of Wurzburg. Henry was crowned by the Archbishop of Mainz as Henry II. He was the first emperor to be crowned without the support of the German nobility. This was a major step for the imperial and religious structure of the kingdom. He was the only Holy Roman Emperor to be canonized.

Henry gained support from the Saxons and others throughout the empire.

Burchard, bishop of Worms, was the protégé of Willigis. Burchard succeeded his brother as bishop of Worms in 1000. This happened only after four candidates of the emperor's choosing died before, or shortly after being ordained.

Burchard was in a long term conflict with the count of Worms, Otto of Carinthia. Otto ruled both Worms and Speyer. Burchard was eventually able to dispossess Otto. He adopted Otto's grandson Conrad and served as his regent. The child Conrad held the titles Count of Worms and Count of Speyer because his father had died at the age of 20. Conrad married Gisela of Swabia. Her grandfather was Conrad I of Burgundy, from the elder Welf dynasty.

The Ottonian dynasty ended when Henry II died in 1024 without children. His queen, Cunigunde of Luxembourg, served as regent for a few months with help from her brothers, and Aribio, the Archbishop of Mainz.

Conrad rewarded Aribio for supporting his election by making him Archchancellor of Italy. Since the Archbishop of Mainz was already the Archchancellor of Germany, Aribio became the second most powerful person in the Holy Roman Empire.

The death of Henry II initiated a period of unrest in Lombardy. Lombard nobility sought to separate the Kingdom of Lombardy from Germany. There was a political feud between Milan and Pavia. Aribert, Archbishop of Milan supported the election of Conrad II as King of Lombardy. He travelled to Bavaria to arrange this in 1025. A group of secular nobility from Pavia also traveled to see Conrad at this time. They asserted the separateness of their kingdom from Germany, and rationalized their rebellion after the death of Henry II. The secular nobility of Lombardy offered the crown to Hugh Capet, and then William V of Aquitaine, but both refused the offer.

Conrad besieged Pavia in 1026. He was unable to breach the walls, but held a blockade on the city. He travelled to Milan and was consecrated as King of Lombardy by Aribert. The death of Leo of Vercelli shortly afterwards made Aribert the foremost religious figure in Italy. Conrad stayed in Lombardy into 1027. Pavia remained in revolt until 1027, when a peace deal was brokered by Odilo of Cluny.

Rudolph III of Burgundy died without heirs in 1032. Conrad went to war over Burgundy with Odo II of Blois. Conrad defeated Odo after two long campaigns during the summers of 1033 and 1044. The Kingdom of Arles, or Burgundy, became a part of the Holy Roman Empire, along with Germany and Italy. However, part of Burgundy was carved off to France in 1032 and ruled as a duchy by the the heir apparent to the Capetian monarchy.

Like Italy, the Kingdom of Arles was largely independent under German rule. This was beneficial to Provence and Burgundy in that it prevented French domination of the region, at least for a few centuries. The kingdom of Arles was a significant Mediterranean region. It was also the border between France and Italy. It bordered Rhone River and had a large population of Jews. These things made it an important part of Papal foreign policy.

Henry III died in 1056 and was succeeded by his 6 year old son, Henry IV. Henry was taken custody of by Pope Victor II, who also served as an adviser to the regent queen, Agnes of Poitou. This made Victor enormously powerful.

Pope Nicholas II died in 1061. The cardinals, led by Hildebrand, elected Alexander II. 28 days later, the Empress Agnes convened a meeting in Basel. It was presided over by Archancellor Wilbert, and attended by bishops and nobles from Germany and Lombardy. They elected Honorius II as antipope. Supported by Agnes, Honorius marched to Rome and expelled Alexander. About a month later, Godfrey of Lorraine marched to Italy and returned Alexander to the See on the condition that it would be decided by Henry IV.

In the meantime, Anno II, Archbishop of Cologne, led a coup that kidnapped Henry. The probable reason for the coup was to reduce the ambitions of Agnes. Anno was backed by the German nobility as well as the Archbishops of Mainz and Bremen. Anno was now in control of the government, and was hostile to Honorius II. He held a Synod at Pavia in 1062 to resolve the disputed papal election. A legate was sent to investigate the claims of Simony against Alexander II. He was deemed innocent and allowed to reign.

Gregory V called Willigis his “Vicar” in a letter.

The third church at Cluny was the largest structure in Europe for centuries. Hugh had a great influence on Urban III, who had been a prior under him at Cluny. This made Hugh one of the most powerful people of the late 11<sup>th</sup> century. He was also the godfather of Henry IV, Holy Roman Emperor.

### **The Defense of Northern Italy**

Controlling Milan was important because it was the primary route into Italy from both France and Germany. The Holy Roman Emperors appointed the Archbishops of Milan to represent their interests there. While Archbishop Aribert was away in 1035, the lesser nobles revolted against him. The lesser nobility were now allied to the burgher of the commune, or the merchant and artisan class.

The emperor, Conrad II, lost confidence in Aribert to maintain order. Conrad responded to the demands of the rebels by granting them an equal status as the magnates. Aribert responded with force, but he and the magnates were driven out of the city in 1042. He returned in 1044. A tentative peace deal was made that limited the authority of the Archbishop. Aribert died in 1045.

This was a critical period for the development of Italy. The feudal land holding class was being challenged by an emerging bourgeoisie in the cities that would largely replace it. The weakening of the feudal structure created a challenge to German imperial rule over Lombardy.

In 1046, Henry III was able to travel to Italy. There were three claimants to the Papacy from local factions. Henry claimed all of them to be unfit and elected Clement II. Clement II was the first of a series of German popes who pushed for reforms in the Catholic Church.

The Papal States shared Central Italy with the March of Tuscany and the Duchy of Spoleto. The March of Tuscany connected them to Northern Italy and continental Europe. This made it a central part of Papal strategy.

Tuscia was originally part of the Lombard kingdom, Langobardia Major. The Donation of Pepin gave the easternmost part of Tuscia to the Papal States. The rest was made into a Carolingian march when it was conquered by Charlemagne.

The March of Tuscany expanded over central Italy by 1000. It was held by the original counts of Lucca, the Bonifacii, until 931. In 931, Hugh of Arles, King of Italy, secured it for the Bosonid dynasty of Provence, which he belonged to. The March experienced a period of stagnation because the margraves had interest in other areas. It was revived by Hugh (969-1001) who, in an alliance with Otto, built up a large powerbase in central Italy. On his death, the march fell apart. In 1004, a war began between Lucca and Pisa. The March passed to the House of Canossa in 1027.

The House of Canossa descended from Sigfried of Lucca (d. 940). The family was a close ally of the German emperors. This alliance allowed them to grow until they controlled most of Northern Italy. When the emperor Conrad II encountered resistance from the Margrave of Tuscany, he replaced him with Boniface III. This is how Tuscany passed to the House of Canossa. Conrad also invaded Italy at this time and supported Boniface III against his Lombard enemies.

Boniface III died in 1067. He was survived by his widow, his son Frederick, and daughter Matilda. Frederick became margrave under the regency of his mother. In order to protect her holdings, she married the primary enemy of the emperor, Godfrey the Bearded, a member of the Ardennes-Verdun dynasty from Lorraine. Henry III was enraged, and on his next trip to Italy, he arrested her and Matilda. Their arrest was followed by the suspicious death of Frederick. Godfrey, meanwhile, evaded capture.

Henry was unable to defeat Godfrey in Italy. Henry's death and the succession of the underage Henry IV put Godfrey in a favorable position. He was recognized as Margrave of Tuscany, while Beatrice and Matilda were returned to him. Beatrice and Godfrey became involved in a series of disputed Papal elections on the side of the Gregorian reformers. The Papacy was also contested by local and imperial factions. Nicholas II and Alexander II were both bishops from Tuscany, and were ardent reformers.

## **Hildebrand**

The Peace of God began in Gascony in 989. It excommunicated anyone that robbed a church, struck a priest, or robbed peasants. This changed over time. A synod in 1033 added merchants and merchandise to the list. The primary goal of the Peace of God was to assert the Church into feudal society. Cluny helped to spread the Peace of God, mostly in France, but then to Germany and Italy

The reform movement was the primary way for the pope to project power. It became characteristic of the new, ecumenical papacy. The main focus of the reform movement was to abolish simony, or the sale of ecclesiastical seats. The overarching goal of the reforms was to consolidate the position of the papacy, and to further the separation of ecclesiastical affairs from secular influence.

Hildebrand was from Rome. He probably visited Cluny shortly after the death of Gregory VI, in 1048. Gregory was followed by a Tusculum, a German pope, then Leo IX in 1049. Leo IX was from Alsace and was related to the Salian Dynasty. On his way to Rome, he stopped to meet Hugh of Cluny. At the same

meeting, he also met Hildebrand. Hildebrand accompanied Leo to Rome. He became Leo's deacon and papal administrator.

This was the beginning of the "Gregorian Reforms", initiated by Hildebrand and his associates. They are named after Hildebrand's regnal name Gregory VII, although he didn't become pope until later.

Leo IX became an avid promoter of the Order of Cluny, and Hugh of Cluny exercised great influence over him.

Leo IX died in 1054. Hildebrande asked Emperor Henry III to elect Gebhard, which he agreed to do. Gebhard, who became Victor II, demanded that before he became Pope, all of the Papal States should be returned to him. Henry agreed to this.

Victor II crowned Henry IV in 1056 when he was only six years old. The queen Agnes became his regent. Victor II was both an advisor to Agnes, and the guardian of Henry.

Hildebrand secured the election of Nicholas II in 1058. Nicholas II was previously the bishop of Florence. Through the Papal Bull, *In Nomine Domini*, in 1058, Nicholas II took the critical step of restricting the Papal election only to the cardinal bishops of Rome. The main result was the near removal of local Roman influence in the Papacy, since the cardinal bishops were mostly foreigners. This made the papacy truly ecumenical. It was also a message to Holy Roman Emperor not to intervene in its affairs.

Alexander II was the first Pope to be elected by the rules of *In Nomine Domini*. The emperor raised an antipope, Honorius II, in response.

### **The Pataria**

The Pataria reform movement sought to reform the Diocese of Milan by removing Simony, which means the sale of ecclesiastical seats. Through the Pataria movement, the Pope endeavored to control the diocese of Milan, and to remove the influence of the emperor over it. The movement caused frequent popular unrest for decades. It culminated into open warfare in the mid-1070's as a part of the larger civil wars surrounding the Investiture Crisis.

From 1032 to 1048 there was a Tusculum Pope. Leo IX became pope in 1049 and was a German reform pope. He began the Pataria movement in earnest by banning simony and nicolaism among the clergy in Milan. The movement came fully into being around 1058. Landolfo, who was subdeacon, was beaten when he attempted to travel to Rome. In 1060, Nicholas II sent a delegation to Milan which included Anselm de Baggio. They restored order in the city. A second attack on Landolfo in 1061 resulted in his death.

In 1069, Henry IV replaced Guido with Gotofredo di Castiglione. Gotofredo was immediately besieged in his castle. In 1070 violence resumed and Gotofredo was arrested in the city. Guido requested to be returned his bishopric, but was placed elsewhere. In 1072, Erlembald replaced Gotofredo with Atto. Atto was not confirmed by Henry IV, however, so he could not assume his position, and resided in Rome.



Imperial presence in Milan was lifted in 1073 with the onset of the Saxon Rebellions. Alexander II confirmed Atto as archbishop. The city allied against Erlembald and he was killed. A decade of unrest followed that wasn't restored until the elevation of Anselmo III to Archbishop, in 1086. Anselmo III was an imperial-appointed bishop that didn't support the Pataria. He was bishop until 1093. The three succeeding bishops after him were all Gregorian reformers aligned to the Pope.

The Saxon revolts tied the hands of the emperor. Once they were over in 1080, he invaded Rome. Several imperial popes followed.

In 1066, William I of Normandy invaded Brittany. Alexander II gave William his blessing and a Papal ring for the invasion of England.

Alexander sent the first Papal legates to Poland. His influence there led to the assassination of the Bishop of Krakow by the King. The first native Polish bishop, he eventually became widely venerated.

There is no record of Jews living in England before William the conqueror. William I invited a group of French Jews to settle in England and trade. Henry I (d. 1135) issued a charter that protected them throughout England. Edward III expelled them in 1290. Many Jews returned as "Lombards" and continued their business of money lending.

The Death of Matilda of Tuscany (1115) initiated the breakup of Northern Italy into smaller communes, which were already largely autonomous. The Lombard League was created in 1167 to unite against the threat of the emperor. In the coming centuries, Lombardy became divided into various alliances, mostly under Milan or Mantua, to counter the forces of the Holy Roman Emperor.

The region of Tuscany itself became contested between two new Republics, Florence and Siena. Florence sided with the Papacy, Siena with the Emperor. This would be one of the larger conflicts in Italy during the Guelph and Ghibelline period.

The defense of Northern Italy from the occupants in the south was primarily taken up by the Duchy of Spoleto. This made it a strong regional power that the pope had to contend with as a part of its constant, delicate diplomacy.

The Normans arrived in Southern Italy in 999. The Normans initially served as mercenaries, mostly for the Lombards. They soon realized the opportunity to exploit the situation. News of the opportunity reached home and the Normans started to come in waves, settling and conquering different areas with relative ease.

In 999, Southern Italy was divided into Lombard and Byzantine regions. The Byzantines controlled most of the southern ¼ of Italy, especially the coast. The Island of Sicily was Muslim. Unlike the conquest of England, the Normans came in small groups and settled various parts of Italy for themselves. This occurred over a period from 999 to 1198.

In 1055, the Seljuk Turks invaded Baghdad and took the Abbasid Caliphate from Buyid control.

The Abbasid Caliphate experienced a resurgence under the Seljuk dynasty while the latter was expanding over the entire Middle East. It was during this time that Sunni Jurisprudence was unified under the Ash'ari school.

The popularization of Islam in the prior three centuries allowed for the emergence of Islamic chivalrous military orders in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, called Futuwwa. The Futuwwa were the means by which the Abbasids defeated the Seljuks and became independent in 1157. Sufis were responsible for both the popularization of Islam in the preceding centuries as well as the concepts of Islamic Chivalry that the Futuwwa were based on.

There were three Seljuk rulers of the Middle East; Tugril, Alp Arslan, and Malik Shah. The capitol of the Seljuks was always in Persia, settling in Isafhan in 1051. The Seljuks didn't rule in Baghdad, so the Abbasid court functioned with little interference.

Alp Arslan (1063-1072) expanded the empire to the Caucasuses and Anatolia. The Seljuks invaded Armenia and Georgia in 1064. In 1068, they conquered most of Anatolia from the Byzantines, which developed into the Sultanate of Rum in the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century.

Malik Shah (1072-1092) expanded the empire throughout Iran, to the border of China. The Seljuk Empire now included The Middle East, the Caucasuses, Anatolia, and Iran. It was one of the largest empires of all time.

When Malik Shah died in 1092, the empire broke up into independent emirates, especially in Syria and Anatolia.

The primary breakaway Seljuk states were the Sultanate of Rum (Rome) and the Sultanate of Damascus. Rum was adjacent to the Byzantine Empire, while Damascus was adjacent to the Fatamid Caliphate. Eastern Anatolia became divided into many Turkic "beyliks", principally the Danishmendids and the Artuqids. These principalities were important for their intermediate position between the Transcaucuses, the Rum Sultanate, and Syria.

Tutush I divided the Damascus Sultanate between his two sons. When he died in 1094, Daquq ruled Damascus, while Radwan ruled Aleppo. Aleppo, the "eye of Syria", the ancient hegemonic city-state, became the primary objective in the Near East during the Crusader period.

After the decline of the Seljuk Sultanate, Georgia began a renewed period of expansion. Al Ma'mun called a Holy War against Georgia in 1121. It was led by Ilghazi. King David defeated the Muslims and Ilghazi. This gave the Crusader States temporary breathing space from the Turks.

The crusader conflicts in Syria and southeast Anatolia weakened Damascus and allowed for the rise of Zengi, the atabeg of Mosul. Zengi conquered Syria and created a large principality covering Syria and Northern Mesopotamia. He divided his beylik among his sons, and Nur Al Din became atabeg of Aleppo.

Nur Al Din's commander, Shirukh, undertook the successful invasion of Fatamid Egypt in 1169. Shirukh became Vizier of the Fatamid Caliph, but died two months later. He was succeeded by his nephew, Saladin. Saladin worked to undermine the Fatamid establishment. When the Fatamid Caliph Al Adid died, Saladin overthrew the Fatamids and established the Ayyubid Sultante in Cairo. He aligned himself to the newly revived Abbasid Caliphate.

The Ayyubids ruled a territory similar to the Fatamids. It included the Hijaz, but notably expanded to include Syria and Mosul. This made the Ayyubid dynasty the climax of the centuries-long conflict in Syria that was started by the weakening of the Abbasids, and peaked during the Crusades. The result was a renewed Egyptian controlled Near East subjugated to the Sunni Abbasid Caliphate, simultaneous to the revival of the Caliphate in Mesopotamia.

Constantinople entered into a sharp decline after the Massacre of the Latins in 1182. The decline of Constantinople allowed for renewed Egyptian supremacy in Syria, and the Near East in general.

The Islamic conquest of North India was achieved after Syria and Egypt, in 1187.

Western Europe went from being the periphery to the primary center of Abrahamic religions during the Crusades. The ancient Near Eastern theatre was used as the pretext to organize Western Europe around Roman Christianity. The Crusades asserted the church in politics. They also caused certain Western European nobility to focus their attention away from their land during a critical formative period for Western Europe. This was why participation in the Crusades primarily consisted of nobility who lay between the Loire in the Seine. Only later did much nobility from other regions take part. This regional focus made possible the formation of Medieval France.

Evidence of a relationship between Roman Christianity and Sunni Islam is shown by the military and political revival of the Sunni Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad during the Crusades. Since about 870, the Abbasid Caliphate had been subordinated to the Turkic or Iranian dynasties in control of the Middle East.

While Talmudic Judaism in Europe developed a mystical component, Judaism in the Islamic world was predominantly influenced by philosophy. This rationalism of philosophy countered mysticism, the latter of which was exclusive and revelatory.

Jewish philosophical activity was driven by the need to find common ground with Muslims. It was apologetical. The growth of Jewish philosophy corresponds to the spread of Shia Islam in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. It developed in close association with Kalam, or Islamic apologetics, and many Islamic philosophers were converted Jews.

Philosophy was characteristic of Jews who resided in the Shia controlled Middle East of the 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries. Shia Islam was hostile to rabbinical law, and Jewish philosophy developed an anti-rabbinical aspect as well. This was represented primarily by the Jewish Karaite sect, which at its height included as much as 40% of Jews in the Middle East.

Karaite Jews were responsible for most, but not all philosophical works. Saadia Gaon (d. 942), the last prominent Gaon, produced philosophy, but was maligned to the Karaites.

Jewish Philosophy was introduced to Europe by Maimonides (b. 1135), aka Rambam. Rambam is probably the most famous medieval Jew. He wrote an encyclopedia that divulged to a great extent the workings of Jewish law. He also wrote a treatise on philosophical rationalism.

When Jewish philosophy reached Europe, it was opposed by the Kabbalah movement. Ravad and Rambam were contemporaries. They each represented the two main streams that Judaism was taking; a conservative, rabbinical orthodoxy, opposed by a philosophical rationalism.

There was an epic confrontation between the two figures. Ravad's position was that Rambam compiled the encyclopedia without citing the proper authorities that produced them, which rendered them illegitimate. Rambam believed that his universal encyclopedia would benefit the diaspora communities. It did this, and in turn it took away power from the Halachic authorities whose job was to interpret and transmit the laws.

His philosophical treatise stirred the most lasting controversy because it became main source of philosophy for European Jews, as well as for Europeans non-Jews.

Rabbinical and mystical Judaism developed in Christian Europe from the point when the Babylonian Geon and Exilarch were disrupted. The Rishonim in Europe continued the authorship of the Talmud that was begun by the Geon. Meanwhile, in the Islamic world, Jewish Philosophy and anti-rabbinical thought was widespread. Anti-rabbinical Karaites experienced their height during the Shia period, from about 900 until the onset of the crusades. Beginning with Maimonides, there was a marked struggle by rabbinical Jews in Europe to suppress the spread of philosophical liberalism among European Jews.

A major component of Pax Mongolica was the development of regions outside of the traditional political zone of Eurasia. This made the period an important one for the establishment of Islam into South and Southeast Asia, and Africa. Islam became popular across the Eurasian steppe and even in China. The period also was important for the spread of Roman Christianity in Northern Europe. The Mongols were a double edged sword; they both expelled Abrahamic interests from the Asian mainland, but also reinvigorated Silk Road commerce across Asia. The increased commerce provided momentum for Abrahamic traders to penetrate into distant regions. The overall effect of Pax Mongolia was to initiate another phase of unprecedented expansion for the Abrahamic maritime littoral.

The penetration into Sub Saharan Africa was done by caravans. The specialization of maritime navigation was replaced with the complexity of navigating and surviving in the desert.

Islamic trade with Africa and Southeast Asia began after the conquests of the Ummayyad Caliphate in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. The economic development of these regions and the spread of Islamic culture to them intensified during the 12<sup>th</sup> century. This was a full 100 years before the conquests of Genghis Khan. However, it coincided with the Khitan Mongolian migration into central Asia.

The expansion of Islam into these peripheral regions during the 12<sup>th</sup> century exhibits foresight of Asian politics. When the Genghis Khan conquered Asia, the Abrahamic religions were already deleveraged from the interior of Asia and its caravan routes. They were now focused on South and Southeast Asia, Western Europe, and Africa.

These distant regions became economically connected by the Mongolian Empire. The position of Islam and Christianity in these regions was benefited by the fact that they had been active in them for centuries already. The result of this work, plus Pax Mongolica, was an enlarged ecumene beyond traditional borders of Eurasia and Egypt, and one in which the Abrahamic religions retained dominance.

Shifting the center of Western Civilization outward and westward compromised its control of more central regions, like the Middle East. It was necessary for the eastern, interior regions that they were withdrawing from to remain suppressed by regular invasions from elsewhere, or else the Middle East supremacy would continue.

The trend of nomads regularly suppressing the Middle East began around the beginning of the current era with the movement of the Alans and Huns, but it became especially apparent with the permanent entrance of Turks and Mongolians into the Middle East. Once a group had come and settled, a new wave was ready to invade. This way, Turkic and Mongolian nomads provided a constant pressure from the northeast into Central and Western Asia. This allowed for Near Eastern supremacy to pass to western, maritime civilization.

The Mongols facilitated the rise of Western Europe by suppressing the Eastern Europe, especially Hungary.

After the nomadic invasions had subsided, maritime and technological superiority was maintained by Europe over Asia.

Western Europe arose as the center of Western Civilization in time to provide isolation for Judaism and Christianity from the empire of Genghis Khan and the invasions of the Mongols. The shift in the focal point of European politics from a central, German hegemony, to a Western European order can be seen by the rise of France, and the decline of Germany during the German interregnum.

The German Interregnum was a boon to the Papacy after the 200 year Investiture Crisis. It relieved the threat of German involvement in Italy until about 1320, around the time that the Papacy moved to Avignon, a Papal enclave within France.

In the early Crusade period, the pope created a balance of power between the Angevins and the French in Western Europe.

Beginning in 1144, over ten years, the Counts of Anjou built up large holdings that comprised modern west France. The addition of Aquitaine, which made the “Angevin Empire”, created a kingdom that was situated in the far west of France.

Poiters, which was the dowry of Eleanor, contained a wealthy culture based on Crusade traffic with Hispania. Her marriage into the Anjou dynasty made it inherit this important current in Western Europe rather than France. The far westward orientation of the Angevin kingdom benefitted the pope because it was the furthest from Italy that a Gaulish Empire could be, and it fully preoccupied the Capetian Kings for half a century.

Angevins off the continent after 1214, but they were followed by Anglo-French wars from 1259.

The French wars with the Angevins were how France expanded over Western Europe, creating Medieval and modern territory of France. The exception to this was the southern coast of France, which was conquered in a Crusade after the Angevin wars.

The victory over the Angevins was followed by the annexation of what became southern France. The Albigensien Crusade (1209-1229) extended the French royal domains to the Mediterranean. This was a significant development for the French Crown because the southern regions were wealthier than the North, and because it was a Mediterranean region. The crown annexed Languedoc during its struggle with the heretical Cathars. Languedoc was the western coastal region from the Pyrenees to the Rhone, extending inland to Toulouse. The region to the east of the Rhone was still the Kingdom of Arles, which remained nominally a part of the Holy Roman Empire.

The lowland countries (Belgium, Flanders) underwent rapid economic development in the decades around 1200. By the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, they rivaled the Italian cities in their economic output. Their economy was based on wool and textiles.

The Swiss Confederacy formed around this time, in response to the ambitions of Germany in the Western Alps.

The Kingdom of Arles was formed by the combination of upper and Lower Burgundy. The count of Provence died in 1245 with no male heirs. He bequeathed Provence to his youngest daughter, Beatrice, because his other daughters were married to the Kings of England and France. His widow, Beatrice the Elder claimed to have been granted the succession by him, but she instead became regent for her daughter.

The younger Beatrice suddenly became the object of desire for European Kings. Both Frederick II and James I of Aragon sent troops to capture her. Her mother took shelter with her in Aix and appealed to the Pope for protection. The Pope had a secret meeting at Cluny with Louis IX and Charles of Anjou. It was agreed that Charles of Anjou would marry Beatrice in return for Louis’ support against the Holy

Roman Empire. Beatrice the elder was subsequently at odds with Charles, but she died later in 1245. Charles became Count of Provence.

Provence was in the Holy Roman Empire, but never swore fealty to the Emperor.

The marriage of Beatrice to Charles began the rise of a new Capetian line, the Capetian House of Anjou. The House of Capet Anjou became the pope's main allies in Italy and the Mediterranean for the next 100 years.

The Papacy spent its resources on a war with the Hohenstaufens, and gathered support from the English, French and Italians. Innocent IV excommunicated Frederick II in 1245.

The German Interregnum marks the end of medieval German hegemony, and the transition from the High Medieval to the Late Medieval period. Western Civilization shifted its focus to Western Europe. France had already arose to become the cultural center of Europe in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The papacy was increasingly backed by the Kingdom of France, but continued to pursue a balance of power in Europe.

The Treaty of Paris in 1259 ended a century of Anglo French wars. This created the threat of French hegemony in Western Europe and the possibility of a French invasion of Italy.

Pope Urban IV aided Charles of Anjou to claim the crown of Sicily from Manfred, the last Hohenstaufen ruler of Sicily. Charles defeated Manfred at the Battle of Benevento in 1266. The establishment of the Capetian house of Anjou Sicily was a major Guelph victory in Sicily. Genoa, Florence, Angevin Sicily, and the Papal States now comprised the larger Guelph cause.

Charles put down rebellions in Provence and subdued Avignon. He invaded Florence in 1266 and established the Guelph party as rulers of Florence. Florence became the head of a regional Guelph league, opposed to Ghibelline Pisa, Siena, and their allies. Charles also invaded Genoa to reinstate the Guelph faction of Genoa, which had been exiled in Provence. These were the Grimaldi's and the Fieschi, who went on to have a long history in Genoa.

The della Torre family were the supporters of the Guelph cause in Milan. In 1277 Ottone Visconti defeated them at the Battle of Desio, becoming ruler of Milan. Ottone appointed his nephew, Matteo, as Captain of Milan in 1282. Four successive German kings (three during the interregnum) elected Matteo Visconti as Imperial Vicar for all of Lombardy.

The first period of Visconti rule lasted until 1302, when the della Torre formed a new league and ousted the Visconti. In 1311 Henry VII arrived in Milan and headed off with della Torre's troops, which he defeated. This secured Visconti rule again. The Della Torres fled Milan and roused rebellions amongst the Ghibelline cities in the region. Matteo was kept busy by traveling and subduing rebellions. Matteo defeated the della Torre's and their supporters in 1313.

The della Torre's Guelph role in Milan was replaced by Robert of Anjou. Robert was the Angevin King of Naples from 1309-1343. He became the champion of the Papacy and leader of the Guelph party in Italy. He led the opposition to the Holy Roman Emperor during Henry VI's invasion into Italy. When Henry VI

died of Malaria in Tuscany in 1313, Robert became the most powerful ruler in Italy. Pope Clement V in Avignon made him Papal Vicar in Romagna and Tuscany in 1314.

The conflict in Milan continued with alternating fortunes. When John XXII was elected in Avignon in 1316, the situation was escalated. He began by excommunicating Matteo. He undertook an investigation of Ghibelline cities. The lords of Milan, Mantua, and Verona were placed under an interdict and forced to abdicate the title of Imperial Vicar given to them by Henry VII. He blocked the election of Giovanni Visconti as archbishop of Milan, appointing instead someone close to the della Torre faction.

The recovery of the Holy Roman Empire and the situation in Italy caused the Papacy to move to Avignon in 1309. Avignon was located in the Comtat Venaissin, a small region along the Rhone river that had become a part of the Papal States in 1274. The papacy was moved to Avignon to receive protection from France, but only led to a moderate increase in French control over papal affairs. This was largely due to a Capetian succession crisis around the time that the Avignon Papacy began.

The beginning of the Avignon Papacy coincided with the replacement of the direct line of Capetians by the Capetian house of Valois. This was the first interruption in the direction succession of Capetians. The last stable monarch from the old Capetian line, Phillip IV, died in 1314. Towards the end of his reign, his long conflict with the Papacy reached its peak.

The reversal of papal fortunes in the Mediterranean 1270s.

The Latin Empire is overthrown, and restored to the Byzantines in 1261.

Venetian Byzantine Treaty of 1268 makes peace to counter Anjou Sicily in Italy and further East. This treaty was a setback for the for the Pope.

Sicilian vespers in 1268. Removes Anjou from the island of Sicily, but not the peninsula. 1282 Aragon gains Sicily with the support of Constantinople.

The pope convinced France to crusade against Aragon. This was a failure and a major setback for France. The conflict benefited the Pope, but the Papacy's reputation was greatly damaged, especially with its main ally, France.

The Holy See lost its position in Mediterranean, but at a time when Western Europe was arising. The order of the Dominicans and the Franciscans were created or restructured. The University of Paris was founded; the first University in Western Europe. These things created an intellectual culture in Europe, a reflection of its economic growth. This was the peak of the 12<sup>th</sup> century Renaissance.

The buildup of Capetian France, and the stability of that monarchy for centuries was due to its close relationship with the Church. Cluniac reformers created the idea of Feudal Monarchy. Unlike Germany, France was developed as a Monarchy. The Capetians used the Peace and Truce of God to their advantage.



1260's Hanseatic League formed. Lubeck dominant. Major opponent of Roman Catholicism and Jews in the North. 1280-1340s secured East West routes in Baltic. Formed by German Merchants operating in London, and can probably be traced further back to German merchants from the lower Rhine region (Grabois).

The prosperity of Islam in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries was utilized for the conquest of India. The Dehli Sultanate conquered most of India by 1330. The establishment of the Bahamani Sultanate in the Deccan region in 1347 was an important milestone for the conquest of the subcontinent. The shift of Islam to the Deccan region was reinforced by the invasions and occupation of Delhi by Timur.

Khwarazmian expansionism: By 1217 Muhammad II had conquered everything from the Jaxartes river to the Persian Gulf. He sets up a rival Shia caliphate to counter the Abbasid Caliph in Baghdad. The Mongolian invasions then favored the Abbasids in this scenario because it was located further west. This is another example of nomadic migrations from Mongolia subverting Iranian expansionism when it threatened Mesopotamia.

Baghdad is sacked by Hugu in 1258. The Mongolian Civil war from 1260-1264 delays the Mongolian domination of the Middle East. The Abbasid Caliphate moves its seat to Cairo in 1261.

Catholic presence rises in Constantinople during the 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. Catholic Massacre. Fourth Crusade. Latin occupation of Constantinople 1204-1261.

Some Greek Kingdoms along the southeast Pontic Sea, like Trebizond, date to this period, and were partially protectorates of Georgia. The Silk Road was rerouted to Trebizond after the sack of Baghdad, and this is how Europeans like Marco Polo traveled to the Far East.

Jewish mysticism was transmitted from the Rhineland to Provence by the 12<sup>th</sup> century. An important link in the transmission of Jewish mysticism was Abraham Ben David, known by the acronym Rabad. He is called the father of the Kabbalah for an early form of the work that he produced.

When the Crusades ended, the Pope needed to assert himself solely through domestic European affairs.

The Holy See used the threat of German Imperialism over Italy as the means to further the political consolidation of Italy, and to increase its influence.

France became the most omnipotent monarchy. Unlike Germany, France was a true monarchy, not held back by the centrifugal forces of princes. After Germany, France became the primary force that the pope needed to reckon with.

France was in a powerful position in 1260, and Philip IV envisioned the reestablishment of a Mediterranean Empire. The failure of the VIIth crusade and the Aragonese crusade were great setbacks for France.

The Mamluk Sultanate conquered most of the Crusader States 1270's. Baybars died in 1277 and a succession crisis ensued. The Sultanate was stabilized by the accession of Qalawun in 1279. He defeated an invasion of Syria led by the Ilkhanids, and supported by Armenians, Georgians, and Seljuks. This made him in control of Egypt and the Levant; and therefore Indo Arabian trade.

Qalawun pursued a policy of cooperation with commercial and religious establishment of Egypt. The Mamluk Sultanate quickly arose as the major cosmopolitan society of its time. The period was the zenith of Egypt and Levantine culture and commerce. Like the Fatamids, they were able to divert all Indo Arabian trade through Egypt, which brought them unprecedented prosperity.

The Mamluk Sultanate had a cosmopolitan character. Its elaborate bureaucracy was run by Muslims from all over the world. It was well disposed towards international merchants.

After the sack of Baghdad in 1258, the Silk Route was reoriented from Syria to the kingdom of Trebizond on the northeastern Black Sea. This made Trebizond a world renowned port until the arrival of the Black Death. It was a dependent of Georgia. The Kingdom of Trebizond developed relationships with the Turks in upper Mesopotamia who opposed the Ottomans.

1382 was the date when the west was severed from contact with the orient. This coincides with the push towards the Atlantic region, shown by the expansion of the Duchy of Burgundy into the Belgium, and also the formation of Spain.

The loss of temporal authority of the Pope was offset by the dependence of these emerging statehoods on large financial loans, and their tendency to amass staggering amounts of debt.

The focus of European politics shifted from the Mediterranean region to Western Europe in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. This elevation is shown by the conflicts grouped together as the Hundred Years war, a divide and conquer strategy aimed at France, but also England. The Duchy of Burgundy, which expanded rapidly in the later part of the war, until it came into possession of the Lowland countries. This bisected Western Europe in a way that resembled Lotharingia. The Duchy was later be transferred to the Spanish Habsburgs, and continued to form an important part of Catholic Hegemony in Western Europe.

The growth of the Duchy of Burgundy occurred during the height 100 years war. It then extended itself into the Lowland countries and intervened in the centuries old French-English conflict there. Its control of the lowland countries made it bear influence in England during the time of the War of the Roses.

Sigismund allied with the English 1415-, leading to the end of the Western Schism.

First part of 100 years war followed by Castilian Civil War (France won)

Later part of the 100 years war included the Burgundian-Armagnac civil war 1407-1435

When the English were off the continent from the 100 years war, the War of the Roses began 1455-85

Burgundian War, between Burgundy, HRE, and the Swiss 1474-77

Roses was followed by the Mad War 1485-88

The extension of Roman Catholic influence into Northern and Northwestern Europe in the subsequent era, or the early medieval period, created the struggle known as the Reformation. Protestantism was focused in Northern Europe because it was resisting the extension of Roman Catholic hegemony into this region.

The Mamluk Sultanate remained in Egypt and the Levant until the Age of Exploration and the discovery of the Americas. The Ottoman Empire conquered Egypt in 1517, but the Near East and the Mediterranean had declined in significance. Their conquest of the entire Near East was only moving into a vacuum.

The Ottoman presence in the Mediterranean and the Balkans bolstered the position of Western Europe. Western maritime civilization still used nomads to threaten or attack their enemies from the east.

Roman Catholicism overcame British Protestantism through immigration. The French Revolution triggered large scale Catholic migrations to Britain, and the union of Ireland and Great Britain bolstered the Catholic population.

The Court Jew was an instrument of the Vatican. Samuel, Jacob, Simon Oppenheimer. Simon Apprenticed Amschel Mayer Rothschild.

George Peabody met Nathan Meyer Rothschild in London. His company became J.P. Morgan and was a shell for the Rothschild's operations in America.

Gary Rollefson "I am We": The Display of Socioeconomic Politics of Neolithic Commodification from Neolithic Corporate Identities edited by Marion Benz, Hans Georg K. Gebel & Trevor Watkins. Berlin ex 'oriente 2017.

[https://www.academia.edu/35499219/\\_I\\_am\\_We\\_The\\_Display\\_of\\_Socioeconomic\\_Politics\\_of\\_Neolithic\\_Commodification](https://www.academia.edu/35499219/_I_am_We_The_Display_of_Socioeconomic_Politics_of_Neolithic_Commodification)

Economy, Ritual, and Power In Ubaid Mesopotamia. Gil Stein (Northwestern University) and Rothman, 1994 [https://www.academia.edu/337166/Economy\\_Ritual\\_and\\_Power\\_In\\_Ubaid\\_Mesopotamia](https://www.academia.edu/337166/Economy_Ritual_and_Power_In_Ubaid_Mesopotamia)

P.M.M.G. Akkermans (2000) In: O. Rouault & M. Wäfler (eds.), *La Djéziré et l'Euphrate syriens de la Protohistoire à la fin du IIe millénaire av.J.-C.* Turnhout: Brepols (2000)), pp. 43-54.

Hamblin, William J. *Warfare In the Ancient Near East to 1600 B.C.* Routledge, 2006.

Beckwith, Christopher. *Empires of the Silk Road.* Princeton, 2009.

Bachrach, Bernard S. *Early Medieval Jewish Policy in Western Europe.* University of Minnesota Press, 1977.

Grousset, Rene. *The Empire of the Steppes: A History of Central Asia.* Translated by Naomi Walford. Rutgers University, 1970.

Golden, Peter B. The Migrations of the Oghuz. [www.academia.edu](http://www.academia.edu). *Archivum Ottomanicum* 4, Jan 1, 1972.

Golden, Peter B. *Turks and Iranians, A Historical Sketch "The Turkic Peoples, a Historical Sketch"* Academia.edu. *The Turkic Languages*, ed. L. Johanson, E. A. Csato, 1998"